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WANDERERS POSTER P 14

RD 15 REWIND Page 5

ROAD TO RIO Page 19

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Co Founder & Director Coerver® Coaching North America

Charlie played for Aberdeen and Dundee in the Scottish First Division before joining Chelsea in the English First Division in 1966 where he played for the next 11 years.

He made 380 league and Cup appearances for the Blues and played in four Cup Finals, winning the English F.A. Cup in 1970 against Leeds and the European Cup Winners Cup in 1971 against Real Madrid.

He also played 16 times for the Scottish National Team and a World Select Team in 1979.

He shares the Chelsea club record of three Player of The Year awards with Gianfranco Zola and in 2005 Chelsea's Centenary celebration year he was selected for the Chelsea All Time XI.

Along with co creator Alfred Galustian Coerver® Coaching International Director Charlie has been a Director of Coerver® Coaching in the Americas since its creation in 1983. He lives in Cincinnati Ohio USA.

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Date(s): 28/01/2014 - 29/01/2014

Time: *5:30 pm - 9:30 pm*

Location: Parade College Bundoora

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RAISING MY OPINION

Andre Zwan

Phoenix flying high

Cellar dwellers no more! Wellington Phoenix coach Ernie Merrick has moved the team out of the doldrums and into the championship play-off limelight.

Whipping the much fancied Melbourne Victory 5-0 at the Cake Tin in Wellington on Saturday evening is a warning to all and sundry that Phoenix are no longer easy-beats. They must now be considered serious contenders for a spot in the play-offs..

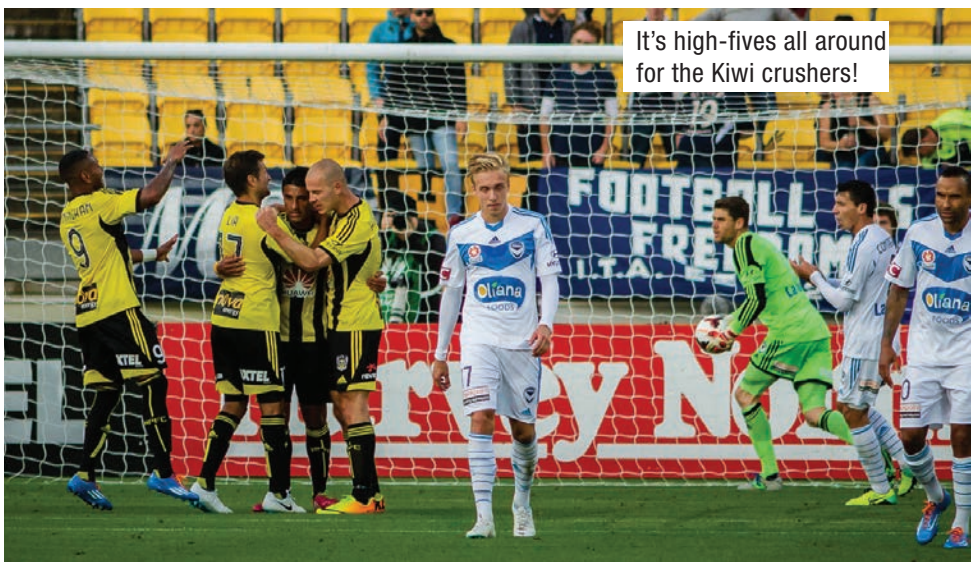
And what is more, the Phoenix fans have created a new craze.....males and females waving their shirts ala the AFL legend Kevin Sheedy -and going topless.

Phoenix are only 14 points adrift from table toppers Brisbane Roar and only three points away from sixth placed Perth Glory. Mission Impossible? Don't think so judging on current form. Phoenix have the ability, hunger and ticker to make the finals.

When Merrick took over from the defensive minded Ricki Herbert, he promised an attacking brand of football and a focus on youth. He has kept faith with his philosophy and has enjoyed the support of the Board.

Phoenix attacked, challenged and pressurised Victory who came to Wellington fresh from a 3-1 win over Wanderers. The fielding of Tyler Boyd, aged 20, in place of Jeremy Brockie and the introduction of 17 year old Matthew Ridenton -he replaced Carlos Hernandez - surprised many but is in line with the team's youth development policy.

No doubt Merrick has achieved a lot in a short space of time at Phoenix but it is still work in progress. Even so his people-skills are paying off.



It's high-fives all around for the Kiwi crushers!

The fact that he has a good rapport with his players was illustrated at halftime. Enjoying a 3-0 lead courtesy of Hernandez (2) and Kenny Cunningham, TV footage from the dressing room showed Phoenix players relaxed with Merrick moving around chatting amiably to his charges. The Victory dressing room was like a classroom. Players were seated classroom style, facing Kevin Muscat and a whiteboard.

Having successfully overcome this major hurdle, the Kiwis now have to face Brisbane Roar this week and avenged the defeat they suffered on December 14 when beaten 2-1.

It's a big test for Phoenix who have now gone five games unbeaten. For they will be without Hernandez and Kenny Cunningham. The Costa Ricans are away on national duty to play two friendlies in South America as a warm-up for the World Cup.

Hernandez wasn't pleased when flicked and replaced by Ridenton. But it made sense as Merrick has shoulder tapped Ridenton as a possible stand- in for the absent Hernandez. The appearance of Tyler Boyd in place of the seasoned Jeremy Brockie was another head scratcher. Boyd did well and is a player with a bright future.

The re-appearance of Brockie who has been goalless since round 4, was anticipated and paid off with the striker scoring in the 86th minute to make it 4-0. Being dropped was a wake-up call for the popular Brockie and once again illustrated that reputations mean little to Merrick.

Overall, the player to impress me most was veteran Stein Huysegems. The former Belgian international has a high work rate. He was constantly looking for action. His on-the-balls skills when confronted by two or three defenders are brilliant to watch. He lays off well and is definitely not selfish. His goal in the 88th minute was a classic. Harassed by two defenders he twisted and turned before slamming home his seventh goal of the season with his leftfoot.

It brought a wry smile to Merrick's otherwise dead pan face. How sweet as.....for the man who after taking Victory to two A-League titles, was fired.

**Andre Zwan is a former journalist and Government Affairs strategist.*

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Contents

Soccer Hotlines	3
Scoreboard	4
Match Reports	5-10
Previews	11
Souvenir Poster	14
Tweets	16
Columns	18
V-League	21
Overseas	23

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Publisher:
Alimental Enterprises Pty Ltd
PO Box 142 Port Melb VIC 3207
Ph: 03 9551 7538

Distribution:
All Day Distribution
Tel: (03) 9482 1145

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Mark Milligan update

Melbourne Victory wishes to advise that the offer presented to the club for the transfer of captain Mark Milligan has been withdrawn.

Miligan was the target of a million dollar swoop by a Middle Eastern club.

Mark will continue his rehabilitation from minor knee surgery and the Victory looks forward to having him back on the pitch soon.

Jets and van Egmond agree mutual termination

The Newcastle Jets and Gary van Egmond have agreed a mutual termination of his contract as head coach of the Jets effective immediately, with current National Youth League coach and former Socceroo Clayton Zane appointed as interim head coach.

Craig Deans will remain as an assistant coach while also taking on the role of National Youth League coach for the remainder of the season.

The announcement follows the Newcastle Jets taking four points from the last 18 available in the Hyundai A-League competition.

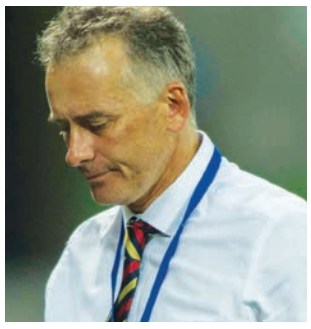
"After not qualifying for the A-League Finals Series for the last three years, this is a vitally important season for the Club and both parties, the Club and Gary agree team requires a new voice and direction to take us forward," Jets CEO Robbie Middleby said.

Zane, a Hunter product who made 70 appearances for the Newcastle Breakers in the old National Soccer League, is in his third season in the Newcastle Jets' coaching set-up.

The 14-time Socceroo initially served as head coach of the Jets W-League team and has been in charge of Newcastle's National Youth League (NYL) side for the past two seasons.

"In Clayton, we have an ex-Socceroo who has played at a high level in Europe and is a talented young coach," Middleby said.

"Our youth team is currently enjoying its best season to date in



the NYL, sitting in second in the competition.

"We have confidence that Clayton will bring a new perspective to take the team forward this year and battle for Finals qualification."

The Jets will commence the process to identify and appoint a new head coach in the coming weeks.

Berisha to leave Brisbane Roar for Victory

Melbourne Victory have laid down the gauntlet early for the 2014-15 A-League season with the signing of Besart Berisha from Brisbane.

Berisha will move to Victory as their international marquee for the next two seasons, making the move as the most lethal striker in the A-League's history with 41 goals in just 65 appearances since joining Brisbane before the 2011-12 campaign.

Victory head coach Kevin Muscat claimed he cannot wait to work with a player who has given him plenty of headaches as a coach.

"Besart has been performing at the highest level week-in, week-out for Brisbane and has caused plenty of headaches for opposition defenders and coaches, including myself," Muscat said in a statement.

"He's a proven goal-scorer and a

player that we can't wait to welcome to Melbourne Victory.

"It's certainly well documented how competitive Besart is and that is something every A-League fan surely admires about him."

Brisbane lobbied Football Federation Australia (FFA) last week for special dispensation to pay Berisha outside the salary cap next season as the 28-year-old Albanian was reportedly asking for a pay rise.

With Thomas Broich and Matt McKay already filling the Roar's two marquee positions, FFA's rejection of Brisbane's proposal put Berisha's future at Suncorp Stadium in serious doubt.

"With the salary cap we have in this league, the ins and outs of players are a fact of life," Brisbane head coach Mike Mulvey said.

The signing of Berisha indicates Chilean defender Pablo Contreras is unlikely to remain at the Victory next season, as the 35-year-old currently the club's international marquee slot.

Rogic lands at Victory

Talented Socceroos midfielder Tom Rogic has arrived at Melbourne Victory to finalise his loan, until the end of May, from Celtic FC.

The 21-year-old is expected to play a key part in the Club's 2013/14 Hyundai A-League season and will also be involved in Melbourne Victory's upcoming Asian Champions League campaign, which begins with a must-win qualifier in Geelong on Saturday, February 15.

Melbourne Victory coach Kevin Muscat said he was thrilled to be able to welcome Rogic.

"There has been a lot of interest in Tom's immediate future ahead of the World Cup and we are very pleased that his club, Celtic, has decided that Melbourne Victory is the best-fit for him at this stage of his career," Muscat said.

"Tom is a talented young player and we look forward to seeing him grow even further during his time with us, both in our domestic competition as well as the Asian Champions League."

Rogic made 23 appearances with Central Coast Mariners, before moving to Scottish Premier League giants, Celtic FC.

Pending receipt of an International Transfer Certificate, it is hoped Rogic will be available for selection in Melbourne Victory's U-NITE match against Sydney FC on Australia Day.

Sayonara Nichols

Meanwhile, Melbourne Victory can also confirm that Mitch Nichols will be released by the club, with the midfielder set to sign for J-League outfit Cerezo Osaka, provided the 24-year-old passes a medical.

Nichols made 14 Hyundai A-League appearances for the club during the 2013/14 season after making his debut in the opening round.

SCOREBOARD

ROUND FIFTEEN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last 5 matches
1 Brisbane Roar	15	10	1	4	28	13	+15	31	D L W W L
2 Western Sydney Wanderers	16	7	5	4	17	15	+2	26	L L W L D
3 Central Coast Mariners	15	6	6	3	14	15	-1	24	W D D W L
4 Melbourne Victory	16	6	5	5	22	22	+0	23	L W D L D
5 Adelaide United	15	5	5	5	22	20	+2	20	W W D W D
6 Perth Glory	15	5	5	5	15	14	+1	20	D W W L D
7 Newcastle Jets	15	5	4	6	15	17	-2	19	L D L L W
8 Sydney FC	15	6	1	8	17	22	-5	19	L L D L L
9 Wellington Phoenix	15	4	5	6	20	18	+2	17	W D W W W
10 Melbourne Heart	15	1	5	9	12	26	-14	8	W L D L L

Adelaide United 1 (Carrusca 4)
Western Sydney Wanderers 0
Crowd: 11,356 at Coopers Stadium

Sydney FC 0
Central Coast Mariners 1 (Sterjovski 58)
Crowd: 16,006 @ Allianz Stadium

Wellington Phoenix 5 (Hernandez 21', 47' (pen), Cunningham 46', Brockie 85', Huysegems 87')
Melbourne Victory 0
Crowd: 7,000 @ Westpac Stadium

Perth Glory 0
Brisbane Roar 0
Crowd: 11,026 at nib Stadium

Melbourne Heart 3 (Ramsay 44', Dugandzic 46', 69')
Newcastle Jets 1 (Regan 37')
Crowd: 5046 @ AAMI Park

THIS WEEK

Round 16 Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Jan 24 Brisbane Roar v Wellington Phoenix	Suncorp Stadium	7:00 PM	8:00 PM
Sat Jan 25 Adelaide United v Melbourne Heart	Hindmarsh Stadium	5:00 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Jan 25 Central Coast Mariners v Newcastle Jets	Bluetongue Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Jan 26 Melbourne Victory v Sydney FC	Etihad Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM
Sun Jan 26 West Sydney Wanderers v Perth Glory	Parramatta Stadium	7:00 PM	7:00 PM

NEXT WEEK

Round 17 Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Jan 31 Melbourne Heart v Sydney FC	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Fri Jan 31 Perth Glory v Melbourne Victory	NIB stadium	6:45 PM	9:45 PM
Sat Feb 1 Wellington Phoenix v Adelaide United	Eden Park, Auckland	7:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Feb 1 Newcastle Jets v West Sydney Wanderers	Hunter Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Feb 2 Brisbane Roar v Central Coast Mariners	Suncorp Stadium	4:00 PM	5:00 PM

AGAINST ALL ODDS

A-League Title 2013/14

Brisbane Roar	2.50
Wanderers	4.50
Melbourne Victory	7.00
Central Coast Mariners	8.50
Adelaide United	9.00
Sydney FC	13.0
Perth Glory	15.0
Newcastle Jets	13.0
Wellington Phoenix	17.0
Melbourne Heart	151

TOP GOAL SCORERS

Stein Huysegems	Wellington Phoenix FC	7
James Troisi	Melbourne Victory	7
Besart Berisha	Brisbane Roar	7
Adam Taggart	Newcastle Jets	6
Alessandro Del Piero	Sydney FC	5
Jeronimo Neumann	Adelaide United	5
Archie Thompson	Melbourne Victory	4
Finkler Guilherme	Melbourne Victory	4
Ranko Despotovic	Sydney FC	4
Matthew Smith	Brisbane Roar	4

A-LEAGUE TEAM OF THE WEEK Round 15

Compiled by Nick Amies

Harry Kewell made a solid contribution in Heart's long-awaited first win of the season. Photo: LIVE PIXELS

Eugene Galekovic (Adelaide United)
A stalwart in between the posts for Josep Gombau, Galekovic has been a calming influence both on and off the pitch while fans waited for the tiki-taka philosophy to embed itself in the squad. Now that the team has found its rhythm the captain shines as a ball-playing shot-stopper, starting team attacks as well as extinguishing those of the opposition admirably at Coopers Stadium to earn his fourth clean sheet of the season.

Storm Roux (Central Coast Mariners)
The New Zealand international continues to go from strength to strength in what has been a rather inconsistent period for the majority of his teammates. Fresh from his December nomination for NAB young footballer of the year, Roux once again turned in a measured performance on the right flank; often finding space in the opposition half to supplement the Mariners attack in addition to being rarely beaten in defence.

Trent Sainsbury (Mariners)
The young defender has been the mainstay of the Mariners defence all season and once again he shone for the yellow and navy at Allianz Stadium. Revisiting the site of the club's grand final win last season Sainsbury put in a similarly faultless performance, ensuring Phil Moss and his players would go back to Gosford in good spirits.

Matt Smith (Brisbane Roar)
Playing a man down for the final hour of a match is difficult enough, but to do it away from home on one of the A-League's toughest road trips and come away with a point (possibly three barring a shaky finish from Henrique) further cemented Brisbane Roar's status as title favourites. Matt Smith was a key component of his side's rear-guard action as Perth pursued a winner, consistently denying the likes of Shane Smeltz and Chris Harold the chance to beat Michael Theo in goals.

Aziz Behich (Melbourne Heart)
The drought was finally broken for the red side of Melbourne in a 3-1 victory over the lacklustre Newcastle Jets and while the spotlight was firmly on marquee man Harry Kewell, left back Aziz Behich was an integral part of both the attack and defence. The young man's link up play with Ian Ramsay was devastating at times, reaping dividends in the dying minutes of the first half as Mate Dugandzic headed home the Heart's crucial second goal from a delicious Behich cross.

Albert Riera (Wellington Phoenix)
The most defensive minded member of the foreign trio running the Phoenix midfield, Riera's impressive performances often get lost in adulation for his teammate Carlos Hernandez but he was a standout at Westpac Stadium on Saturday. Filling the 'Makelele role' to perfection, the Spaniard altered the tempo of the match at will, spraying passes across the field to stretch his opposition. The 30-year-old also put in his share of defensive work to consolidate his side's ever-growing lead over the course of the match.

Carlos Hernandez (Phoenix)
The Costa Rican dynamo gave his former side a night to forget at Westpac Stadium, conspiring with compatriot Kenny Cunningham to bring about the demise in emphatic fashion. Hernandez opened the scoring after Tyler Boyd's feint opened the defence, giving the midfielder the space to shoot past Nathan Coe for his second of the season. He added his third of the campaign in injury time of the first half; calmly dispatching a penalty kick he won himself to effectively put the match to bed.

Harry Kewell (Melbourne Heart)
Missing for much of his side's record winless streak, there were significant reservations about the marquee man's ability to reverse the Heart's flagging fortunes upon his return from injury. However Kewell has played like a man possessed, papering over the shortcomings of his weaker teammates with some authoritative displays. No-one was better at AAMI Park as the Heart finally tasted victory, with Kewell the grand architect of Newcastle's demise and in the process making a clear statement of intent to be in the reckoning for the Socceroos in Brazil.

Kenny Cunningham (Phoenix)
Cunningham did his best impression of Carlos Hernandez on Saturday when scoring his side's second of the game, walloping the ball from thirty yards into the top corner in a scene reminiscent of his compatriot's effort several seasons ago against Gold Coast United. The Costa Rican has been slow to adapt to the competition, but another impressive performance and a well-deserved goal should build his confidence to another level.

Bruce Djite (Adelaide United)
The powerful number 11 was at his irresistible best at Coopers Stadium, creating a multitude of problems for the Wanderers defence with his ability to hold up the ball and bring teammates into the play. Creating his side's winning goal with an intelligent lay-off on the goal line to Carrusca, Djite was unlucky not to find the back of the net himself with a thunderous drive from outside the area.

Iain Ramsay (Melbourne Heart)
Rounding out the TOTW is the erratic Iain Ramsay. The winger has blown hot and cold all season but found his touch in his side's win over the Jets, shredding the opposition defence with smart running and eye-catching passes. After having a hand in the lead up to his side's second the winger went one better with the victory-sealing third, swiftly releasing Mate Dugandzic behind the Jets defence with an improvised volleyed pass.

Photos: LIVE PIXELS

Triumphant Heart finally find their feet

Melbourne Heart

MELBOURNE HEART

3

Newcastle Jets

NEWCASTLE UNITED JETS

1

Match Details

Melbourne Heart FC 3 (Ramsay 45', Dugandzic 45+2', 67')
Newcastle Jets 1 (Regan 37')
Aami Park, Melbourne
Attendance: 5, 046
Referee: Alan Milliner

Melbourne Heart: 1.Andrew Redmayne (Gk), 3.Robbie Wielaert, 6.Patrick Gerhardt, 7.Iain Ramsay, 8.Massimo Murdocca, 10.Harry Kewell (C), 15.David Williams (11. Michael Mifsud 32'), 16.Aziz Behich, 17.Jason Hoffman, 22.Nick Kalmar (4. Orlando Engelaar 59'), 23.Mate Dugandzic (19. Benjamin Garuccio 84')

Substitutes Not Used: 20.Tando Velaphi (Gk), 24.PatRick Kisnorbo
Yellow Cards: Nil
Red Cards: Nil

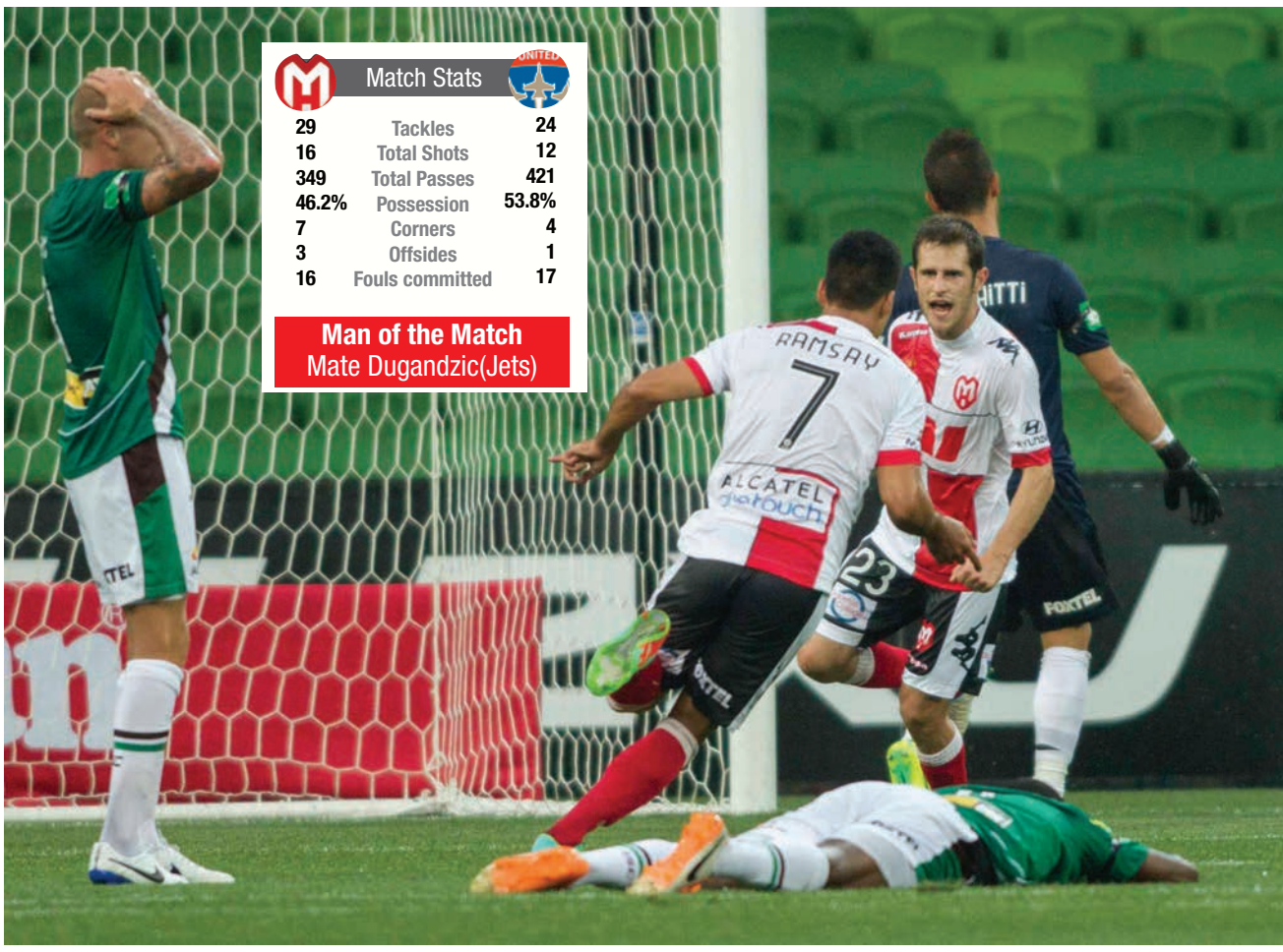
Newcastle Jets: 1.Mark Birighitti (Gk), 3.Taylor Regan, 4.Kew Jaliens, 5.Ben Kantarovski (19. Michael Bridges 61'), 6.Zenon Caravella, 8.Ruben Zadkovich (C), 9.Emile Heskey, 11.Craig Goodwin, 16.Jacob Pepper, 17, James Virgili (27. Nick Ward 46'), 21.Sam Gallaway (18. James Brown 46')

Substitutes Not Used: 20.Ben Kennedy (Gk), 13.Joey Gibbs
Yellow Cards: Kantarovski 3', Regan 13', Pepper 62, Brown 63', Jaliens 90'
Red Cards: Nil

By Chris Hearn

Melbourne Heart have put an end to a horrid 20-game winless run with a 3-1 win over the Newcastle Jets at AAMI Park. It is a result that the fans have been crying out for all season long - and those who braved the heat were not disappointed.

In their 100th competitive match in the Hyundai A-League, Heart battled against the odds after going a goal down to roar back to victory. After Taylor Regan put the visitors ahead on 37 minutes, groans were heard loud and clear from the terraces. But as the cool change swept into Melbourne, Iain Ramsey and Mate Dugandzic scored in quick succession to put the beleaguered Heart ahead before half time, and Dugandzic added a third in the second period to wrap up the points. As is becoming a recurring theme at AAMI Park, Heart started brightly but fell behind, this time thanks to some poor marking from a set piece. Craig Goodwin delivered a deep cross and Regan's effort bounced before nestling in the top corner. It was a period of real concern for the home side thereafter, with the Jets getting a serious foothold in the contest. Goodwin was a constant threat, while Emile Heskey and Ruben Zadkovich combined well as the skipper nearly found a way past Andrew Redmayne. John v'ant Schip's side then showed the kind of belief and determination that John Aloisi continually spoke of. Their first goal came with a fair chunk of luck, something they have been sorely lacking this season. A long diagonal found Harry Kewell's and his header fell to Iain Ramsey, his strike at goal took a heavy deflection off Kew Jaliens, leaving Mark Birighitti helpless.



The tide finally turns for Heart as Iain Ramsey's effort gets a lucky break and is deflected into the net, pulling the home side level.

If the cool change was welcomed with open arms, a second goal was reason to jump for joy, and the home fans did in first half stoppage time. Aziz Behich was set free down the left side and his cross found Dugandzic, who made no mistake from six yards.

Optimism was high, and the Heart built on their momentum, taking complete control of the contest after half time. The Jets looked tired, and their efforts being matched by a side looking desperate to avoid yet another negative result. The Jets were simply unable to provide any service to Heskey, and the Heart were able to counter attack with relative ease. A clever Ramsey through ball found Dugandzic bearing down on the Jets goal, and the former Victory man slotted home past the onrushing Birighitti. The margin might've been larger if the home side managed a higher level of efficiency in the final third. Dugandzic had numerous opportunities to add to his brace, denied by the impressive Birighitti each time. Along with their impressive performer between the posts, Gary van Egmond's side can count themselves lucky that they finished the match with 11 men on the park. Ben Kantarovski risked dismissal in the first half, cynically bringing down Mate Dugandzic, having already been booked. It was a night full of positives for Melbourne Heart, especially for their big name players. Orlando Engelaar made his debut and looked very solid, coming on for Nicky Kalmar. Whilst Harry Kewell produced his best performance at the club he joined in June last year. He regularly bamboozled the Jets rearguard in a highly energetic display. It's probably a case of 'too little, too late' when speaking of finals contention, but this result will lift the spirits of those at the football club.

Melbourne Heart players celebrate Iain Ramsey's equalizing goal.

Mate Dugandzic was in menacing form on Friday night and delivered with a brace.

Photos: GREG SEATON

10-man Roar leaves Perth with a point

Perth Glory

0

Brisbane Roar

0

Match Details

Perth Glory 0
Brisbane Roar 0
Friday, 17 January 2014
Crowd: 11, 026 @ Nib Stadium,
Referee: Kris Griffiths-Jones

Perth Glory: Gk Daniel Vukovic, 7 Jacob Burns, 11adrian Zahra, 14 Steven Mcgarry, 15 Isaka Cernak (9 Shane Smeltz 56'), 16 Sidnei Sciola Moraes, 17 Chris Harold, 23 Michael Thwaite, 24 Matthew Davies (19 Josh Risdon 66'), 25 Riley Woodcock, 36 William Gallas (2 Jack Clisby 46')

Substitutes Not Used: Rgk Luke Radonich, 6 Cameron Edwards, 39. (Gk)

Yellow Cards: Steven Mcgarry, 5', Jacob Burns 26', Danny Vukovic 33', Adrian Zahra 58'
Red Cards: Nil

Brisbane Roar: Gk Michael Theo, 2 Matthew Smith, 3 Shane Stefanutto, 7 Besart Berisha, 10 Henrique (28 Brandon Borrello 83'), 11 Liam Miller (23 Dimitri Petratos 80'), 13 Jade North, 17 Matt Mckay, 18 Luke Brattan, 19 Jack Hingert, 22 Thomas Broich

Substitutes Not Used: Rgk Matthew Acton, 27 Devante Clut, 35 Jai Ingham

Yellow Cards: Besart Berisha 1', 30', Liam Miller 35', Jade North 69', Jack Hingert 90+3'
Red Cards: Besart Berisha 30'

By Peter Simcox

Perth Glory missed a glorious chance to consolidate their place in the top five when a 10-man Brisbane Roar held them to a 0-0 draw at the nib Stadium on Friday evening.

It could have been worse for the home side as the Roar had the better chances on the night, the best falling to Henrique. The Brazilian firing over when sent clear by man of the match Thomas Broich.

Roar coach Mike Mulvey was full of praise for his side, and said he had urged his side to pursue the win despite Glory having an extra man on the pitch. "The game is about entertainment first and foremost and we could have come here and tried to keep the ball and not try to go forward, but that's not me and that's not the club and it's certainly not want the players want to do," Mulvey said. "We want to, wherever we are, play football and win games and we very nearly got what we deserved tonight. "I'm very happy with the performance, but I'm actually disappointed we didn't get the three points and that probably speaks volumes about how we played."

The Glory made one change to the side that beat Melbourne Heart 3-0 last week, with French defender William Gallas coming in for Jack Clisby, who dropped to the bench. The Roar made two changes to the side that were beaten 2-1 by Adelaide United last week, with Jack Hingert coming in for the suspended Diogo Ferrerira, while Besart Berish replaced Dimitrios Petratos, who dropped to the bench.

Roar's Albanian striker Berisha went into referee's Kris Griffiths-Jones' notebook after a crude challenge on Michael Thwaite in the first minute of the game, and there was more to come between the two combatants. The big defender recovered and had the first chance of the night; his looping header was tipped over the bar by Michael Theo. It was end to with Chris Harold firing wide for the home side, before Broich did likewise for the visitors. Then Sidnei was found on the left of the penalty area by Isaka Cernak, but his shot from 12-yards was straight at Theo.

Then on the half hour the league leaders were reduced to 10-men, when Berisha was given a second year card after another poor challenge on Thwaite, much to the delight of the parochial Perth crowd. A melee ensued with Glory keeper Danny Vukovic and Roar midfielder Liam Miller given yellow cards. Before the break Theo saved Steven McGarry's long-range shot, but the best chance fell to the Roar just before half time. Luke Brattan's long-range free kick beat Vukovic but the post came to the rescue of the Glory custodian.

The visitors opened the second half brightly and should have gone ahead three minutes in. Broich's superbly timed through ball sent Henrique in one-on-one with Vukovic, but the speedy striker fired wide from the edge of the penalty area. Moments later Broich burst clear, but just as the German was about to pull the trigger Clisby, who replaced Gallas at half time, made a superb last ditch tackle.

The Roar was now on top and the Glory had to soak up some intense pressure, with Matt MacKay, Broich and Brattan outstanding, but they lacked the final ball in the final third of the pitch. The Glory slowly got back into the game and substitute Shane Smeltz fired wide from Jacob Burns' cross. Then with 10 minutes remaining Josh Risdon made space down the right, and his curling cross picked out Adrain Zahra, but the youngster wasted the opportunity. Moments later Chris Harold overhead kick was too high. Then in the last minute Smeltz and Harold combined on the edge of the penalty area, and the New Zealand international was brought down. Clisby stepped up but his free kick deflected off the wall and away to safety.

Glory interim coach Kenny Lowe said his side had been lucky at times and failed to adapt once Brisbane were reduced to 10 men. "We had a game plan and at 11v11, everyone was executing all their roles, responsibilities and jobs," Lowe said. "When they went to 10, it just threw a little spanner in the works. People didn't quite know where to go and what to do. "Let's be honest, in every game we've had a bit of luck and we did tonight. Henrique went through and, dear me, I don't think he'll sleep tonight."

Match Stats		
27	Tackles	22
9	Total Shots	10
420	Total Passes	428
50%	Possession	50%
7	Corners	5
1	Offsides	2
16	Fouls committed	8

Man of the Match
Matthew Davies (Glory)

It's early bath time for Roar's Besart Berisha after the Albanian international gets his marching orders.

Thomas Broich (Roar) and Jack Cisby (Glory) hit the deck in sprawling fashion.

Roar keeper Michael Theo is at full stretch as Matt Smith and William Gallas await the crumbs.

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Photos ANDREW TURNER

5-star Phoenix thrash Victory in Wellington

Wellington Phoenix

5

Melbourne Victory

0

Match Details

Wellington Phoenix: 5 (Hernandez 21', 47' (Pen), Cunningham 46', Brockie 85', Huysegems 87')
Melbourne Victory: 0
Crowd: 7,000
Venue: Westpac Stadium, NZ

Wellington Phoenix: Glen Moss (Gk), Manny Muscat, Michael Boxall, Andrew Durante, Ben Sigmund, Vince Lia, Albert Riera, Kenny Cunningham, Carlos Hernandez (Matthew Ridenton 52'), Stein Huysegems, Tyler Boyd (Jeremy Brockie 81')

Unused Substitutes:
Lewis Italiano (Gk), Leo Bertos, Roy Krishna

Yellow cards: Lia
Red cards: None

Melbourne Victory: Nathan Coe (Gk), Adama Traore, Pablo Contreras, Adrian Leijer, Leigh Broxham (DylaN Murnane 82'), Gui Finkler (Jesse Makarounas 56'), Rashid Mahazi, James Jeggo (Jordan Brown 69'), James Troisi, Archie Thompson, Kosta Barbarouses

Unused Substitutes: Lawrence Thomas (Gk) Chris Cristaldo

Yellow cards: Contreras, Broxham, Traore, Leijer, Mahazi.
Red cards: None

By Joe Gallagher in NZ

Ask anyone in New Zealand's capital and they will tell you – with only the normal dose of bias – that it was only a matter of time before Wellington Phoenix handed out a thrashing to another member of the A-League.

Inevitable or not, there was a sense of poetry about Saturday's recipient of the hiding. It was a case of master against student; Ernie Merrick hosted his previous employers in Melbourne Victory and welcomed Kevin Muscat, who had coached for six years, to his new home.

The visitors were pummeled; 5-0 the result, and it could have been more. When Muscat left the field at full-time, his head bowed, much of the near-7000 in attendance were happily recalling memories of the 6-0 drubbing of Gold Coast United in 2009.

In truth, this win was better. Wellington played more attractive football than they did that day and, going by history alone, their opponent is much more of a coup than the now-defunct Gold Coast outfit.

The Wellingtonians, temporarily lifted above Adelaide United into eighth place, have since fallen back into ninth, but the three points places the Phoenix right back amongst a mid-table logjam and well and truly back in the running for a playoff spot.

If confidence is required for a trip to Queensland to face the league-leading Roar on Friday, this game certainly provided it.

The Victory fall into fourth spot, and while they were eyeing a run at the second-placed Wanderers, they'll now be looking over their shoulder at the chasing pack.

In defence of the two-time A-League champions, who were lining up for their third game in eight days, they were depleted by injury and backing up from a Tuesday night fixture against the Wanderers.

Wellington	Match Stats	Victory
25	Tackles	17
17	Total Shots	6
427	Total Passes	541
43.7%	Possession	56.3%
5	Corners	6
2	Offsides	4
10	Fouls committed	19

Man of the Match
Albert Riera (Phoenix)

Carlos Hernadez makes no mistake from the spot as Phoenix race to a 3-0 lead before the break.

But Muscat would be the first to admit that his side were outclassed on the night, and would likely have received a similar punishment even at full strength.

A renowned attacking quartet Archie Thompson, Kosta Barbarouses, James Troisi and Gui Finkler endured forgettable evenings. One can recall just a solitary chance on goal all game, after the All White Barbarouses had cut inside Manny Muscat and squared to Thompson.

The striker's air-swing said all you needed to know about the Victory's impotence in front of goal.

Wellington led just after quarter of an hour through their midfielder Carlos Hernandez. A former Victory fan favourite himself, Hernandez latched onto a Vince Lia pass and fired a snapshot past Nathan Coe into the back of the net, his first outfield goal for the Phoenix.

Right-back Michael Boxall nearly doubled the lead after half an hour, controlling a raking diagonal pass with an assured touch of the chest before being thwarted by Coe, who could only watch on as Belgian striker Stein Huysegems' effort on the rebound was cleared off the line.

Kevin Muscat very nearly entered the interval with a one goal deficit that might have been considered manageable, but within the final two minutes of the period the damage inflicted upon his side was beyond repair.

Kenny Cunningham launched a spectacular dipping half-volley over Coe, before Hernandez expertly drew a foul from Rashid Mahazi in the penalty area. Hernandez completed his brace from the spot and it was all about damage limitation from therein for Muscat and the Victory.

The duo who secured the Phoenix a comprehensive half-time advantage will miss next week's visit to Brisbane after being released to play for Costa Rica in a World Cup warm-up match this week.

The only question that remained in the second half was how wide the final margin would be – and for much of the spell it appeared as though Melbourne would keep the scoreline at three.

Merrick offered a run to teenage Matthew Ridenton and a ten minute spell to the out-of-form Jeremy Brockie, who had been earlier replaced in the starting lineup by Tyler Boyd.

A bit of freedom did Brockie the world of good, scoring his first goal since November with five minutes to play after connecting with a superb Albert Riera through-ball on the edge of the area.

He added an assist for good measure, outmuscling his defender and delivering a cross which Huysegems controlled with all the confidence of the league's joint-top goalscorer, before turning and finishing with aplomb.

Brockie and Huysegems' jubilant celebrations said it all – this was a Wellington side who finally felt some vindication for a philosophy that had seen them go winless for the first two months of the season.

It was a far cry from November's 3-2 loss to the same opposition, a match in which Wellington's desire to push forward and play the ball out from the back became disastrously unstuck.

Many a side might have reverted to the old system after that defeat. But not Wellington. Their resolve – and Merrick's determination – is finally starting to reap some reward.

Muscat and the Victory must pick themselves up in a hurry before the Big Blue on Australia Day.

Stein Huysegems is firing all cylinders of late and was in fine form once again in front of goal.

Victory keeper Nathan Coe comes out to bravely punch clear amidst another Phoenix onslaught.
Photo: PETER McDONALD

Photos: AARON MCNULTY

Sterjovski winner piles the pressure on Farina

Sydney FC

0

Central Coast

1

Match Details

Sydney FC 0
Central Coast Mariners 1
(Sterjovski 58')
Allianz Stadium, Sydney
Referee: Peter O'leary/Stephen Lucas

Central Coast Mariners Fc: 12. Liam Reddy (Gk), 2. Daniel Mcbreen, 3. Joshua Rose, 5. Zachary Anderson, 8. Nick Montgomery (C), 11. Nick Fitzgerald (9. Mitchell Duke 74'), 15. Storm Roux, 16. Trent Sainsbury, 17. Anthony Caceres, 19. Matt Simon, 21. Mile Sterjovski (20. Bernie Ibini 69')

Substitutes Not Used: 1. Justin Pasfield (Gk), 4. Marcel Seip, 6. Brent Griffiths

Yellow Cards: Simon
Red Cards: Nil

Sydney FC: 20. Vedran Janjetovic (Gk), 3. Marc Warren (16. Joel Chianese 65'), 4. Ranko Despotovic, 5. Matthew Jurman, 6. Nikola Petkovic, 8. Pedj Bojic, 9. Corey Gameiro, 10. Alessandro Del Piero (C), 15. Terry Mcflynn, 19. Nick Carle (21. Milos Dmitrijevic 66'), 22. Ali Abbas

Substitutes Not Used: 1. Ivan Necevski, 2. Sebastian Ryall, 28. Matthew Thompson

Yellow Cards: Petkovic, Mcflynn, Despotovic
Red Cards: Nil

By Bryson Ferreira

Sydney FC once again failed to live up to their reputation as a 'glamour' club last weekend with a characterless, sterile performance against the Central Coast.

If the result wasn't bad enough, it was the performance of the team that has enraged many supporters of the club, having gone down one nil in the second half and failing to respond.

Despite encouragement from the ever-fanatical Cove before kick-off, the home team started slowly, allowing two excellent chances to the Mariners in the opening five minutes, which included a bullet header cleared off the line by Corey Gameiro.

The Mariners then opened up the Sky Blues and put Josh Rose in down the left hand side, but a solid save by Vedran Janjetovic thwarted the fullback's attempt on goal.

Fifteen minutes later and the Mariners had yet another chance to take the lead, after Matt Simon steered a free header on the six yard box past the post of the helpless Sydney FC goalkeeper.

Despite the poor start to the match, the Sky Blue fans then had what they thought was a goal against the run of play, only to the see the linesman flag for offside.

An exquisite no-look pass from Del-Piero put Ranko Despotovic in behind the Mariners defense where he rounded a hapless Joel Reddy, however play was brought back after replays showed the Serbian drifted just offside.

Minutes later and the Mariners were in again having sprung Sydney's offside trap, but youngster Nick Fitzgerald was unable to finish despite being one-on-one with the keeper, spraying his effort high and wide.

The Sky Blues best chance of the match came just after half time when Ranko Despotovic's flick-on put Corey Gameiro one-on-one with Joel Reddy.

Much like the Mariners in the first half however, the former Fulham starlet was unable to trouble the keeper, pushing his shot wide.

In the 58th minute the Mariners finally had the goal that their first half pressure warranted.

A careless pass from a normally meticulous Alessandro Del Piero gave former Socceroo Mile Sterjovski the ball just outside the box.

The Sydney FC defenders then stood off the Mariner, allowing him time to take a shot which took a wicked deflection past Janjetovic and into the back of the Sydney FC net.

Despite having gone a goal down at home, Sydney FC created very little from that point on, something that would have infuriated their loyal home fans.

Having suffered their 8th loss of the season, you would think that something has to change at Sydney's so called 'glamour' club.

Having not seen their team win since the 15th December, not to mention the poor run of form they had to endure at the start of the campaign, Sydney FC fans turned on their coach and players following the weekends loss, and perhaps rightfully so.

Most of the pressure at the moment is focused on Frank Farina and the Squad he has assembled over the past year, however, is that the source of Sydney's problems?

Personally, Sky Blue fans should be searching much deeper into their club, and not simply pile the pressure on their incumbent manager.

Since their inception, Sydney FC have had a constant turn over of CEO's, Chairman and coaches, and it appears that will continue this season with Farina's head once again on the chopping block.

With yet another poor run of form perhaps a new manager with new ideas will be good for the players, but isn't that what we said this time last year when Ian Crook resigned?

Farina may or may not be the right man for the job, one thing is for certain however, if Sydney FC want to remain a 'glamour' club, they need stability at all levels, not just players and coaches… although that would be a good start.

Thou Shall Not Pass! Central Coast's Storm Roux provides a human obstacle for Sydney FC's Alessandro Del Piero.

Match Stats

10	Tackles	18
10	Total Shots	15
453	Total Passes	440
50.6%	Possession	49.9%
3	Corners	7
6	Offsides	5
14	Fouls committed	19

Man of the Match
Mile Sterjovski (Mariners)

Marc Warren (SFC) sends his cross over in a flash as Storm Roux (Mariners) closes in.

Sydney FC's Corey Gameiro winds up to let one one loose.

Photos: ADAM BUTLER

Reds March Into Fifth After Sinking Wanderers

Adelaide United

1

Western Sydney

0

Match Details

Adelaide United 1 (Carrusca 4)
Western Sydney Wanderers 0
Crowd: 11,356 at Coopers Stadium

Adelaide United: 1.Eugene Galekovic, 21. Tarek Elrich, 5.Osama Malik, 4.Jonathon McKain, 3.Nigel Boogaard, 14.Cameron Watson (17. Awir Mabil), 8.Isaias, 10.Marcelo Carrusca (23.Jordan Elsey), 18.Michael Zullo (31.Ryan Griffiths), 11.Bruce Djite, 7.Jeronimo Neumann.

Yellow cards: McKain, Isaias, Mabil.
Red Cards: None

Wanderers: 1.Ante Covic, 22.Dean Heffernan, 3.Adam D'Apuzzo, 5.Michael Beauchamp, 32.Daniel Alessi, 10.Aaron Mooy, 21.Shinji Ono, 31.Alusine Fofanah (19.Mark Bridge), 17.Yousouf Hersi, 7.Labinot Haliti (23.jason Trafiro), 9.Tom Juric (11.Brendon Santalab).

Yellow cards: D'Apuzzo, Mooy, Hersi, Juric.
Red cards: None

By Matt Mays

Adelaide United continued their unbeaten run to six games but more importantly rising into fifth place in the A-League with a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Western Sydney Wanderers at Cooper's Stadium on Sunday afternoon.

Marcelo Currusca lifted the ball neatly into the roof of the net early doors for the Reds, after Djite set up the Spaniard keeping the ball just inside the bye-line, although replays showed last years Premiers may have been hard done by.

The win was followed by last weekends mammoth 2-1 win at table toppers Brisbane Roar, and stretching an unbeaten that gives Adelaide United a fighting chance of turning a 'stepping-stone' season into a possible late championship charge.

Western Sydney though continue their woes. After last Tuesday's defeat to Melbourne Victory, and a surprise loss in Paramatta to Wellington Phoenix, the loss in Adelaide means they are in a slump.

The visitors though brought a loud and proud RBB with them from New South Wales, setting up an incredible atmosphere inside Cooper's before the game.

Despite the intimating atmosphere behind Covic's goal, Adelaide took the lead with their first meaningful attack.

Marcelo Currusca, who was making his comeback from an injury lay off, took advantage of a smart steal from Djite, who poked the ball away from the keepers hands after a goalmouth scramble. However the television replays showed that the ball may have crossed the line.

Western Sydney were ruffled, picking up two cautions in the preceding seven minutes from Aaron Mooy and Adam D'Apuzzo respectively.

Adelaide United where playing football the way they coach Gombau has set from day one; fast, on the floor and lots of movement. The only thing missing from the great start was another goal, but the chances flew.

First Jeronimo Neumann was found through on goal after an inch perfect lofted through ball from Currusca, only for the Argentine to drag his shot just past the upright.

It took Wester Sydney time to settle and absorb the pressure, and almost netted created on twenty minutes, but Labinot Haliti couldn't quite get onto Ono's pass.

But Adelaide remained on top, and could have killed the game before the break. Once again Neumann found himself one-on-one but his fall prevented him to capitalise bury his chance as he scuffed wide once more.

The Reds injury woes continued. Zullo replaced ten minutes from half time after being hurt in a tackle. But Awer Mabil, who signed a contract extension this week, came on as the replacement.

Western Sydney's closest effort of the game was almost goal of the season, but not even Shinji Ono can bicycle kick from 25 yards and score when he wants. But credit to the marquee, it was a spectacular effort, just before the break.

As much as the Reds were dominating, last year's A-League Premiers were holding their own at the back and soaking up the pressure, just offered very little going forward.

Galekovic was almost left red faced early in the second half as he fell over during some Western Sydney pressure, but survived.

Ryan Griffiths came on for his Cooper's home debut midway through the second half and nearly made an instant impact with a dangerous cross, but no one could was at the end of it.

Djite produced an absolute thunderbolt on sixty minutes from long range, missing the upright with the tightest of margins.

But ultimately both sides cancelled each other out going forward and Adelaide held on for a hard fought and deserved win.

Despite the long unbeaten run, Reds Spanish coach Gombau still has his feet well and truly on the ground.

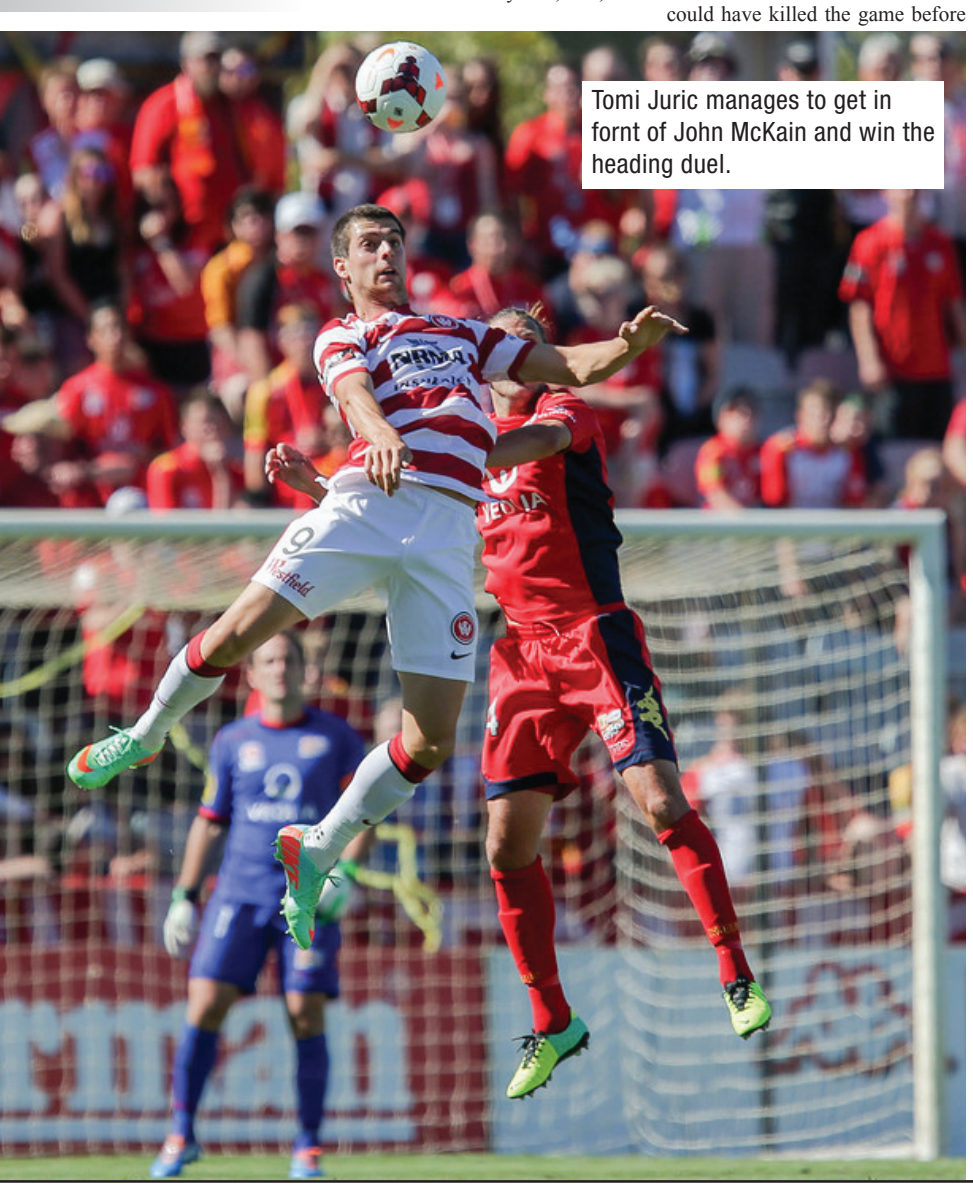
"Ofcourse I am very happy because statistically we were the better team and it was good to win this game for the fans, but we need to continue to train well next week and win next week otherwise these points become in-valuable."

Man of the match - Currusca: His comeback from injury could not have been better from the Spaniard, taking his chance when it counted and dangerous throughout.

Match Stats		
25	Tackles	22
12	Total Shots	6
420	Total Passes	317
56.5%	Possession	43.5%
5	Corners	3
3	Offsides	3
20	Fouls committed	18

Man of the Match
Carrusca (Adelaide)

Wanderers keeper Ante Covic can only stand and watch as Adelaide United celebrate taking the early lead and what ultimately ended up being the winner.



Tomi Juric manages to get in fornt of John McKain and win the heading duel.

Jeronimo Neumann and Adam D'Apuzzo get themselves in a tangle as they both miss the ball.

Brisbane Roar v Wellington Phoenix

Fri Jan 24 Suncorp Stadium 8:00 PM

Roar Line Up

1.Michael THEO
2.Matthew SMITH (c)
3.Shane STEFANUTTO
10.HENRIQUE
11.Liam MILLER
13.Jade NORTH
14.Diogo FERREIRA
15.James DONACHIE
17.Matt McKAY
18.Luke BRATTAN
19.Jack HINGERT
20.Matthew ACTON (gk)
22.Thomas BROICH
23.Dimitri PETRATOS
26.Corey BROWN
28.Brandon BORRELLO
34.Patrick THEODORE
35.Jai INGHAM
Two to be omitted

Ins: 14.Diogo FERREIRA (returns from suspension), 15.James DONACHIE (returns from injury), 26.Corey BROWN (returns from international duty – Young Socceroos)
Outs: 7.Besart BERISHA (suspended – one week)

Unavailable: 5.Ivan FRANJIC (stomach injury – one week), 25.George LAMBADARDIS (knee - season)

Roar Out To End Phoenix Rise

Jarrod Ellis

League leaders Brisbane Roar will kick off the Australia Day long weekend with a clash against the in-form Wellington Phoenix FC at Suncorp Stadium on Friday night.

The home side will be hoping to put an end to their recent patchy form whilst the Phoenix will be looking to make it six in a row and claim their first ever win in Brisbane.

Wellington's recent resurgence culminated in last weekend's 5-0 thumping of Melbourne Victory, a result that raised plenty of eyebrows around the league. On the back of that win there has been talk of finals football for the kiwi side and despite still languishing in ninth place on the ladder another win this weekend could see the Phoenix in the top six should other results go their way.

Particularly pleasing for Wellington last weekend was Jeremy Brockie's return to the score sheet. Second on last season's A-League scoring charts the All-Whites striker is an important cog in Wellington's attack and his struggles this season have coincided with the Phoenix's poor results.

Should Brockie return to his 2012/13 form his partnership with Stein Huysegems could very well prove to be the A-League's most potent strike force. The Belgian has also found his scoring boots in recent weeks and Brisbane will need to be on their game to keep him quiet.

Despite having to keep an eye on Huysegems and a possibly rejuvenated Brockie Brisbane's defence will certainly have an easier time of things considering Carlos Hernandez and Kenny Cunningham will both be absent due to international duty.

The Costa Rican duo would be a significant miss for any A-League side, Hernandez has become increasingly influential as the season has progressed and has created the second most goal scoring chances of any player in the league.

The only player ahead of him, Brisbane's Thomas Broich, will be on the pitch on Friday night, having played through an injury in his side's 0-0 draw with Perth Glory.

Broich's availability will be key to Brisbane's hopes of avoiding three straight home defeats with several key players set to be absent.

The Odds	Head-to-Head
Roar 1.50 Draw 4.33 Phoenix 7.00	Played 10 Heart 3 Jets 5 Drawn 2

Referee: Chris Beath

Radio Broadcast: ABC Grandstand Full coverage Online/Mobile phone app. SBS Radio.

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #BRIvWEL

Kiss of Death
Brisbane 1-0 Phoenix

Ivan Franjic is unlikely to return for the match, the fullback is set to need another week to recover from what has been described as a "stomach strain".

Matt McKay is another casualty for the Roar, the star midfielder having picked up an ankle injury last weekend.

The other notable absentee is of course Besart Berisha. The Albanian striker is suspended due to his dismissal against Perth Glory, leaving Brisbane bereft of the league's top striker.

It's a state of affairs that Brisbane have been in before this season with his recent injury troubles and one which they will have to become accustomed with the an-

Phoenix Line Up

1.Glen Moss (GK)
2.Manny Muscat
3.Reece Caira
4.Luke Adams
5.Michael Boxall
6.Josh Brindell-South
7.Leo Bertos
10.Stein Huysegems
11.Jeremy Brockie
12.Tyler Boyd
13.Albert Riera
14.Alex Rufer
15.Jason Hicks
17.Vince Lia
18.Ben Sigmund
20.Lewis Italiano (GK)
22.Andrew Durante (c)
24.Roy Krishna.
Two to be omitted

In: 3.Reece Caira (returns from u-22 international duty), 4.Luke Adams (promoted), 6.Josh Brindell-South (promoted), 14.Alex Rufer (promoted), 15.Jason Hicks (promoted),
.
Out: 9.Kenny Cunningham (international duty), 21.Carlos Hernandez (international duty),

Adelaide United v Melbourne Heart

Sat Jan 25 Hindmarsh Stdm 5:30 PM

Adelaide Utd Line Up

1.Eugene GALEKOVIC (GK) (c)
3.Nigel BOOGAARD
4.Jon McKAIN
5.Osama MALIK
7.JERONIMO
8.ISAIAS
10.Marcelo CARRUSCA
11.Bruce DJITE
13.Steven LUSTICA
14.Cameron WATSON
16.Daniel BOWLES
17.Awer MABIL
20.Paul IZZO (GK)
21.Tarek ELRICH
22.Fabio FERREIRA
23.Jordan ELSEY
26.Anthony COSTA
31.Ryan GRIFFITHS
Two to be omitted

Ins: 22. Fabio FERREIRA (returns from injury), 16.Daniel BOWLES (returns from injury)

Outs: 18.Michael ZULLO (hamstring - 1– 2 weeks)

Unavailable: 6.CASSIO (hamstring tendon – indefinite), 9. Sergio CIRIO (hamstring - 1 week)12.Antony GOLEC (China), 15.Jacob MELLING (knee – 4 weeks)

REDS HOPE TO BREAK HEARTS

Matt Mays @mattahoo87

Adelaide United are full of confidence, swagger, and consistency right now, and they have the form to prove it as they welcome strugglers Melbourne Heart to Cooper's Stadium this weekend.

The Reds are on a hot streak of six unbeaten games, and a run of two straight wins against the top two sides on the ladder; a smash and grab in Brisbane and a hard fought win at home to Western Sydney Wanderers.

Reds coach Josep Gombau has well and truly turned things around for the good. Just a few weeks ago Adelaide where struggling for goals and his spat with a local journalist hindered the pressure. Since then, Adelaide have risen to fifth in the ladder and look like a stable unit.

The Heart on the other hand are on the other side of the spectrum. Having recently lost their manager, they sit rock bottom of the ladder but was the surprise of the round last weekend with a shock victory over in-form Newcastle Jets.

On paper this game looks to be a nothing but an Adelaide home win, but Adelaide United have only won just one of their previous four meetings at home to Melbourne Heart.

For Heart though, they are in a weird and new situation - heading into a game on the back of a win. Confidence will be sky high and the pressure lifted off their shoulders after an ugly nineteen game winless streak, which included fourteen losses and five draws.

But despite the relief over last weeks win, goalscorer Mate Dugandzic says the win should not hide away the fact that much improvement is still needed.

"To be honest, there wasn't too much celebrating; we were all happy and relieved to get the first win," Dugandzic said.

"We know ourselves it's a long way into the season, playing 14-15 games winning only one game, it's not good
enough, we know that ourselves, so it was pretty low-key – just a few high-fives."

The last time the sides met was back in early December, where Heart came back from two goals down to clinch a point in a thrilling 3-3 draw at AAMI Park.

One reason for the resurgence of Adelaide's form this season has been noted by the manager as making fewer mistakes on the pitch.

"Now we are controlling things better and when you make less mistakes, you win more games and your confidence is up," said Gombau.

"We need to keep these good performances that we have at the moment until the end..and we will then have the chance to stay in the top six."

The Adelaide United coach this week started a program to share his philosophy to the hundreds of coaches in and around Adelaide, in a bid to pass on his wisdom as part of a "Coach The Coaches" initiative. The 12-week program, mainly aimed at junior coaches, is in place to promote the new Adelaide United philosophy and improve football education in South Australia.

The Odds	Head-to-Head
Adelaide 1.80 Draw 3.60 Heart 4.65	Played 26 Glory 5 Roar 16 Drawn 5

Referee: Kris Griffiths-Jones

Radio Broadcast: Grandstand Digital Adelaide and Melbourne Online/Mobile phone app

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #ADLvMHT

Kiss of Death
Adelaide 2-0 Heart

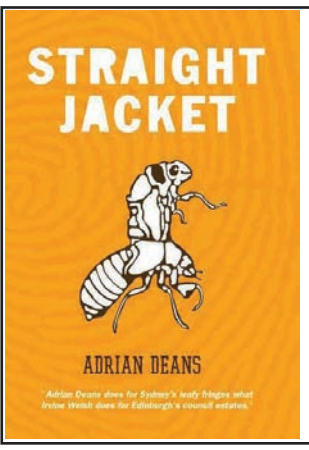
Heart Line Up

1.Andrew REDMAYNE (GK)
2.Jeremy WALKER
3.Robbie WIELAERT
4.Orlando ENGELAAR
5.Sam MITCHINSON
7.Iain RAMSAY
8.Massimo MURDOCCA
10.Harry KEWELL (C)
11.Michael MIFSUD
16.Aziz BEHICH
17.Jason HOFFMAN
18.David VRANKOVIC
19.Benjamin GARUCCIO
20.Tando VELAPHI (GK)
21.Stefan MAUK
22.Nick KALMAR
23.Mate DUGANDZIC
24.Patrick KISNORBO,
Two to be omitted

Ins: 2.Jeremy WALKER (promoted), 5.Sam MITCHINSON (promoted), 18.David VRANKOVIC (returns from international duty), 21.Stefan MAUK (returns from international duty),

Outs: 6.Patrick GERHARDT (ankle 1 week), 15.David WILLIAMS (ankle 1 week)

Unavailable: Nil



A new novel by GW's Adrian Deans

Adrian Deans does for Sydney's leafy fringes what Irvine Welsh does for Edinburgh's council estates.
Straight Jacket is a ripsnorter of a ride through the dark heart of the burbs and may just be Australia's answer to American Psycho.
Kirsten Krauth, just_a_girl

Sometimes funny, sometimes disturbing, and always compelling. With a super original premise
and a one-of-a-kind protagonist, Deans' entertaining follow up to Mr Cleansheets delivers on every level.
Tony Wilson, Making News

A disturbingly good read. Unnerving and darkly comic.
Stuart Quin, Ealing Studios Australia

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CC Mariners v Newcastle Jets

Sat Jan 25 Bluetongue Stdm 7:30 PM

Mariners Line Up

1.Justin PASFIELD (Gk)
2.Daniel MCBREEN
3.Joshua ROSE
4.Marcel SEIP
5.Zachary ANDERSON
6.Brent GRIFFITHS
7.John HUTCHINSON (C)
8.Nick MONTGOMERY
9.Mitchell DUKE
11.Nick FITZGERALD
12.Liam REDDY (Gk)
13.Hayden MORTON
15.Storm ROUX
16.Trent SAINSBURY
17.Anthony CACERES
19.Matt SIMON
20.Bernie IBINI
21.Mile STERJOVSKI
Two to be omitted

Ins: 7.John HUTCHINSON (C) (returns from suspension), 13.Hayden MORTON (promoted)

Outs: Nil

Unavailable: 10.Marcos FLORES (knee – season), 14.Michael MCGLINCHEY (on loan – Vegalta Sendai), 18.Michael NEILL (knee – season), 23.Adam KWASNIK (knee – season)

None Shall Pass!

Adrian Deans

'None shall pass!' Was the catch-cry of the Black Knight in Monty Python's comedy classic.

The Black Knight was eventually cut to bits by the amusingly sarcastic King Arthur, but he kept fighting. The only difference between the Black Knight and the Mariners is that no matter how much the Mariners get chopped up, they keep winning.

It has been a staggering performance when you consider how much the team has been disrupted over the last few seasons, but they constantly finish around the top and have made three Grand Finals in the last four years. Any other club would kill for those results, but no other club has had to put up with the revolving door – selling stars to stay afloat.

This year alone they've lost Mat Ryan, Bernie Ibini (now returned), Pedj Bojic, Michael McGlinchey and Marcos Flores (injury), but the loss of Arnie and Andrew Clark is the only thing that's slowed them down. Until now. The match against Sydney last week showed the Mariners have somehow regrouped under Phil Moss and are dominating other sides and creating chances again. As soon as they get their shooting boots on it will be business as usual (ie, back in the top two).

This week they play the wounded Jets, who venture south without Gary van Egmond after he reached a 'mutual' understanding with the club (ie, 'mutual' in that they both understand he was sacked).

The Jets have been a bit of a mystery this season. They have good players and show flashes of brilliance, but have never managed a sustained run of form. If their Olyroo contingent are available for selection I would not be surprised to see them respond positively to the loss of their coach – as teams so frequently do.

It's about time Emile Heskey did something to remind us of why he was such a good player – he's been a tad absent in games this season. I'd also like to see Michael Bridges and Zenon Caravella get a run in the side – two excellent players whose limited opportunities for Newcastle have surprised me. Given a chance they could really lift the Jets.

The Odds	Head-to-Head
Mariners 1.80 Draw 3.60 Jets 4.85	Played 19 Phoenix 2 Victory 11 Drawn 6

Referee: Jarred Gillett

Radio Broadcast: 92.5 ABC Central Coast, 1233 ABC Newcastle, Online/ Mobile phone app

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #f3derby

Kiss of Death
Mariners 2 – 1 Newcastle

This is the M1 (nee F3) derby, after all, so the players ought to be up for it. The fans will be. Newcastle fans always travel in numbers and the Yellow Army have been noticeably louder this year – accompanied by an excellent brass band that has really added to the match day atmosphere. Maybe they could add that Sousa march to their repertoire that used to open the Monty Python's Flying Circus?

'None shall pass!'

Adrian Deans is the author of Mr Cleansheets and more recently Straight Jacket – published by High Horse Books and available in all good book stores. www.adriandeans.com

Jets Line Up

1.Mark BIRIGHITTI (gk)
3.Taylor REGAN
4.Kew JALIENS
6.Zenon CARAVELLA
7.Andrew HOOLE
8.Ruben ZADKOVICH (c)
9.Emile HESKEY
11.Craig GOODWIN
13.Joey GIBBS
15.Josh BRILLANTE
16.Jacob PEPPER
17.James VIRGILI
18.James BROWN
19.Michael BRIDGES
21.Sam GALLAWAY
20.Ben KENNEDY (gk)
22.Adam TAGGART
27.Nick WARD
Two to be omitted
Ins: 7.Andrew HOOLE (returns from international duty), 15.Josh BRILLANTE (returns from international duty), 22.Adam TAGGART (returns from international duty).

Outs: 5.Ben KANTAROVSKI (suspension – 1 week).
Unavailable: 2.Scott NEVILLE (knee injury – long term) 25.Mitch COOPER (knee injury – long term). 29. Joel GRIFFITHS (awaiting International Transfer Clearance)

Melbourne Victory v Sydney FC

Sun Jan 26 Etihad Stadium 5:00 PM

Victory Line Up

1.Nathan COE (gk)
2.Pablo CONTRERAS
4.Nick ANSELL
6.Leigh BROXHAM
7.Gui FINKLER
9.Kosta BARBAROUSES
10.Archie THOMPSON
11.Connor PAIN
13.Andrew NABBOUT
14.James TROISI
16.Rashid MAHAZI
17.James JEGGO
20.Lawrence THOMAS (gk)
21.Tom ROGIC
23.Adrian LEIJER
24.Scott GALLOWAY
25.Jason GERIA
31.Dylan MURNANE.
Two to be omitted

Ins: 4.Nick ANSELL (returns from international duty), 11.Connor PAIN (returns from international duty), 13.Andrew NABBOUT (returns from injury), 21.Tom ROGIC (Celtic FC), 24.Scott GALLOWAY (returns from international duty), 25.Jason GERIA (returns from international duty).

Outs: 3. Adama TRAORE (suspension – 1 week), 22. Jesse MAKAROUNAS, 26. Jordan BROWN, 27. Christopher CRISTALDO

Unavailable: 5. Mark MILLIGAN (knee, 3-5 weeks)

Big Blue Bounce Back

Andrew Bishara

The last two these sides met, Sydney pulled off a miraculous 3-2 win, with only ten men. The win sparked an upturn of form for the Sky Blues as it rose up the table.

The Melbourne Victory followed suit, as it began to click under Kevin Muscat. That was then, and this is now.

Both sides' form has dropped dramatically over the last month. Barring an impressive 3-1 win over the Western Sydney Wanderers, The Victory got spanked twice in five games: 3-0 by the Brisbane Roar and last weekend's humiliating 5-0 drumming by the Wellington Phoenix.

Sydney though, can fare no better. It hasn't won in the last five; losing three of those, and its last win, back in early December, was against a luckless Melbourne Heart.

Both teams though have reason for their drop in form. The Victory has been an inconsistent bunch under Muscat, but injury to key players, suspensions and Socceroo duties have left his team bone dry.

Captain Mark Milligan's presence has been sorely missed in the middle of the park, and he is still weeks away from returning. The drop in form though of Mitch Nichols, because of J.League interest, has been evident.

The good news is that Nichols has officially moved on and Muscat has a replacement in the form of Socceroo hope Tom Rogic, who has joined the club on loan till the end of the season from Celtic.

The former Mariners playmaker said he is stoked to be playing for the Victory after a lack of games for Celtic.

"I am happy there. It's a fantastic club, but I think it's important for me at this stage of my career to be playing," he said.

"It's a good squad there, its very difficult to break into, there's a lot of great players. Everyone wants to play and that's my focus, to come here and play and help Melbourne Victory to further success."

While Muscat will be delighted with the signing of Rogic, his counterpart Frank Farina has to contend with rumours of marquee man Alessandro Del Piero departing at the end of the season. However, the Sydney board has neither confirmed his departure or extension at the club.

For Farina, his concern is Sydney's poor form. Its lack of spark upfront and its nonexistence of passion to fight for points as seen the former Socceroo boss hint that there will be changes.

The Odds	Head-to-Head
Victory 1.73 Draw 4.00 Sydney FC 5.00	Played 26 Sydney FC 10 Mariners 9 Drawn 7

Referee: Ben Williams

Radio Broadcast: ABC Grandstand Full coverage Online/Mobile phone app

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #Unite

Kiss of Death
Victory 1-0 Sydney FC

"I expected a better reaction after the goal and if I'm not going to get that then I'll try players that hopefully will,"

"We've shown since the time I've been here that we'll fight until the end but I don't think we did that as well as we could."

With both teams struggling, this could be the game to help break their current ruts. The Big Blue Derby is always a big occasion; it is feisty, tough and without remorse, but Melbourne seems more likely to bounce back, with a more threatening attacking line-up and Sydney in all kind of bad shapes. The Victory, but only just.

Follow Andrew on Twitter @_andrewbishara

Sydney FC Line Up

1.Ivan NECEVSKI (gk)
2.Seb RYALL
3.Marc WARREN
4.Ranko DESPOTOVIC
5.Matt JURMAN
6.Nikola PETKOVIC
8.Pedj BOJIC
9.Corey GAMEIRO
10.Alessandro DEL PIERO (c)
15.Terry MCFLYNN
16.Joel CHIANESE
19.Nick CARLE
20.Vedran JANJETOVIC (gk)
21.Milos DIMITRIJEVIC
22.Ali ABBAS
24.Hagi GLIGOR
27.Christopher NAUMOFF
28.Matt THOMPSON.
Two to be omitted

Ins: 24.Hagi GLIGOR (promoted), 27.Christopher NAUMOFF (promoted).

Outs: Nil

Unavailable: Rhyan GRANT (knee – season), Peter TRIANTIS (groin - indefinite).

West Sydney Wanderers v Perth Glory — Sun Jan 26 Parramatta Stdm 7:00 PM

Wanderers Line Up

1.Ante COVIC (gk)
2.Shannon COLE
3.Adam D'APUZZO
4.Nikolai TOPOR-STANLEY
5.Michael BEAUCHAMP (c)
7.Labinot HALITI
9.Tomi JURIC
10.Aaron MOOY
11.Brendon SANTALAB
12.Tahj MINNIECON
13.Matthew SPIRANOVIC
14.Kwabena APPIAH
17.Youssouf HERSI
19.Mark BRIDGE
20.Jerrad TYSON (gk)
21.Shinji ONO
22.Dean HEFFERNAN
23.Jason TRIFIRO
Two to be omitted

Ins: 12.Tahj MINNIECON, 13.Matthew SPIRANOVIC, 14.Kwabena APPIAH (all promoted)

Outs: 28.Alusine FOFANAH, 32.Daniel ALESSI

Unavailable: 18.Iacopo LA ROCCA (injured – 2 weeks)

Time to bounce back for the WSW

Saman Zaiei

Second placed Western Sydney Wanderers will be looking for nothing short of a win when they host sixth place Perth Glory, who will be seeking to break their own record of keeping four clean sheets in a row for the first time, this Australia day at Parramatta.

Western Sydney, despite a steady start to their second season have only taken three points from a potential twelve in their past four fixtures, leaving head coach Popovic scratching his head over his defensive strategies. Having conceded seven of their fifteen goals in just three games, many are now asking, have other teams figured out how to break down their once upon a time brick wall defence? With some instability in defence including the changes made to Beachump and Topor-Stanley, fans are sharing differing views on how the defence should stand. In all fairness though, they have just played three games in eight days, which at this standard can result in very tiresome legs, obviously not to create excuses, but simply to state that putting such pressure on a team can have negative impacts. Despite the outcomes keeper Covic recently stated that he feels they "are still in a good position on the table", but at this stage, with only 11 rounds remaining anything could happen, particularly since only nine points seperate second place and ninth. At this stage in just a couple of rounds, the Mariners, Victory, United and Glory have solid chances to climb up the ladder, bringing the Wanderers down.

For Perth, this will be a game to prove a lot. Never have they beaten the Wanderers home or away (one draw and two losses) and never in the clubs history have they been able to keep four clean sheets in a row. Their previous games have not been very pretty either with a total of nineteen yellow cards handed out and one red, averaging a massive 6.3 per game.

How will the team with the most attempted shots (177), the Wanderers, fair against the team with the lowest attempted shots (123), the Glory, do this Australia day? How many yellow and red cards are you predicting? Will Glory fans finally be able to celebrate for beating Western Sydney or will they have to wait again to achieve their goal? Can the Wanderers bounce back and prove their critics wrong, that they are still in form and can keep their position on the ladder?

Given the recent form of both teams, taking into consideration that the Wanderers will have had seven days break since their last game and nine for Glory, a score draw looks to be the most likely outcome. Also considering that Western Sydney have never scored more than one goal per game against Perth, I can't see them scoring anymore in this one, so the prediction this time will be a 1-1 draw.

The Odds	Head-to-Head
Wanderers 1.58 Draw 4.00 Glory 7.50	Played 4 Adelaide 1 Wanderers 3 Drawn 0

Referee: Strebre Delovski

Radio Broadcast: ABC Grandstand
Full coverage Online/Mobile phone app

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #WSWvPER

Kiss of Death
Wanderers 1-1 Glory

Glory Line Up

1.Daniel VUKOVIC (GK)
2.Jack CLISBY
6.Cameron EDWARDS
7.Jacob BURNS
8.Nebojsa MARINKOVIC
9.Shane SMELTZ
10.Jamie MACLAREN
11.Adrian ZAHRA
14.Steven McGARRY
15.Isaka CERNAK
16.Sidnei SCIOLA MORAES
17.Chris HAROLD
18.Jack DUNCAN (gk)
19.Josh RISDON
23.Michael THWAITE
24.Matthew DAVIES
25.Riley WOODCOCK
36.William GALLAS
**Two to be omitted **

Ins: 10.Jamie MACLAREN (returns from injury), 8. Nebojsa MARINKOVIC (Subject to FFA Approval), 18.Jack DUNCAN (returns from International Duty)

Outs:. 39.Luke RADONICH (GK)

Unavailable: Travis DODD (knee - indefinite), Scott JAMIESON (achilles - indefinite)

EDMONDSON RESIGNS AS FFV TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Football Federation Victoria (FFV) Technical Director David Edmondson has resigned.

Edmondson will continue as head coach of Melbourne Victory for the remainder of the Westfield W-League season and fulfil his duties as Technical Director before commencing his new role in late February as head coach of Bristol Academy Women's Football Club, which competes in the FA WSL, the highest division of women's football in England.

FFV Chief Executive Officer Mitchell Murphy said Edmondson would be greatly missed.

"Dave's departure is a big loss for the organisation," Mr Murphy said. "He is not only an excellent coach but also a quality person and FFV wishes him all the best in his new role."

Mr Murphy said the recruitment process for a new Technical Director would commence immediately.

BARNES NAMED VICTORY DEBUT

Melbourne Victory will be bolstered by the debut of American defender Lauren Barnes for its trip to take on Newcastle Jets in Round 10 of the Westfield W-League on Saturday.

Barnes joined Victory on loan from US NWSL club Seattle Reign FC last week and will slot into the centre-back position to replace the injured Emma Checker, who is set to miss 1-3 matches with a medial ligament strain.

Teenagers Tiffany Eliadis and Emily Hulbert have also been named in the final squad for the first time since Round 1 and Round 2.

Round 16: ASK THE EXPERTS

THE VERDICT — Roar - 10 Phoenix - 2 - Draw - 3 | Adelaide - 11 Heart - 1 Draw - 3 | Mariners - 6 Jets - 5 Draw - 4 | Victory - 9 Sydney FC - 3 Draw - 3 | Wanderers - 9 Glory - 3 Draw - 3

Santo Cilauro 37
Roar
Adelaide
Draw
Victory
WSW
Last week: 3

Working Dog Productions

George Donikian 30
Roar
Draw
CCM
Victory
Wanderers
Last week: 1

Media Mogul

George Calombaris 36
Phoenix
Adelaide
Mariners
Victory
Wanderers
Last week: 1

No.1 Victory ticket holder

Eddie Krncevic 21
Draw
Heart
Draw
Victory
Wanderers
Last week: 1

Former Socceroo

John Perin 31
Brisbane
Adelaide
Mariners
Victory
Wanderers
Last week: 3

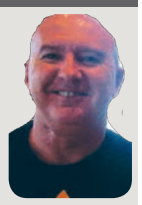
Hall of Fame Socceroo

Andy Harper 30
Brisbane
Adelaide
Draw
Victory
Wanderers
Last week: 0

NSL Champ / Fox Sports

Ross Alatsas 36
Roar
Adelaide
Mariners
Victory
Wanderers
Last week: 3

GM Greek Media Group

Jimmy Campbell 34
Phoenix
Draw
Mariners
Victory
Wanderers
Last week: 3

Former Socceroo

George Campbell 35
Draw
Adelaide
Central Coast
Victory
Wanderers
Last week: 1

Sth Melb & NSL Legend

Jimmy Rooney 25
Draw
Draw
Draw
Victory
Draw
Last week: 2

World Cup '74 Socceroo

Roger Sleeman 34
Roar
Adelaide
Draw
Victory
Wanderers
Last week: 0

Reigning Tipping Champ

John Doyle 26
Roar
Adelaide
Mariners
Victory
Draw
Last week: 1

Original Captain Socceroo

Peter Katholos 36
Brisbane
Adelaide
Mariners
Victory
Wanderers
Last week: 4

Former Socceroo

Steve Blair 32
Roar
Adelaide
Draw
Victory
Wanderers
Last week: 2

Former Socceroo

Kiss Of Death 33
Brisbane
Adelaide
Mariners
Victory
Draw
Last week: 2

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Top Opta Facts

Round 15

Brisbane Roar v Wellington Phoenix

Brisbane Roar are unbeaten in six league matches against Wellington Phoenix, winning the last four (W5 D1).

Wellington Phoenix have travelled to Brisbane Roar 10 times previously in the A-League; they have never won there (D2 L8).

Wellington Phoenix have conceded exactly two goals in each of their last four league meetings with Brisbane Roar.

Besart Berisha (Brisbane Roar) has got on the score-sheet in four of the last five league games between these sides.

No player has created more chances for his teammates this season than Brisbane Roar's Thomas Broich (49).

Indeed, only Broich (49) has created more chances this term than Wellington Phoenix midfielder Carlos Hernandez (42).

No side has conceded fewer goals this season than Brisbane Roar (13).

Adelaide United v Melbourne Heart

Adelaide United have managed just one win in four league games at home against Melbourne Heart (W1 D2 L1).

Melbourne Heart have recorded only one A-League win over Adelaide United in their last seven attempts (D3 L3).

Adelaide United have bagged exactly one goal in each of their last four home league matches against Melbourne Heart.

Melbourne Heart midfielder Andrea Migliorini scored a brace in the reverse fixture earlier this season; the match ended in a 3-3 draw.

Melbourne Heart have kept just two clean sheets this season; fewer than any other side.

Adelaide United have scored four goals via headers this season; a league-high.

Melbourne Heart have the worst shot conversion rate in the division this term (7.3%).

Victory in their last match saw Heart end a 19-game winless streak in the A-League (L14 D5).

CC Mariners v Newcastle Jets

Central Coast Mariners are currently unbeaten in eight league games at home to Newcastle Jets; conceding just twice during this period (W5 D3).

Newcastle Jets have failed to score against Central Coast Mariners in two of the last three meetings.

Newcastle Jets have only kept one clean sheet in 14 previous trips to Central Coast Mariners in the A-League.

Three of the last five A-League games between Central Coast Mariners and Newcastle Jets have ended in a draw.

Mark Birighitti (61) has made more saves than any other goalkeeper this term.

All three of Marcos Flores' goals this season have arrived from the penalty spot; more than any other player.

Newcastle Jets' Adam Taggart has scored three goals from outside the box this term; a league-high.

Melbourne Victory v Sydney FC

Melbourne Victory have lost only twice in the last 13 meetings against Sydney FC (W4 D7).

Sydney FC are without an away win in seven league visits to Melbourne Victory (D4 L3).

Seven of the last 12 matches (including play-offs) have been drawn between Melbourne Victory and Sydney FC.

Archie Thompson has scored in three of the last four league meetings involving these sides.

No side has been shown more red cards this campaign than Sydney FC (3).

Sydney FC are the only side yet to record a nil-nil draw this season.

Sydney FC have picked up just one point from their last five games in the A-League (D1 L4).

Melbourne Victory come in to this game off a 0-5 defeat against Wellington Phoenix – their biggest deficit in an A-League game since October 2012 (0-5 at Brisbane Roar).

West Syd Wanderers v Perth Glory

Western Sydney Wanderers have played Perth Glory three times previously in the A-League; scoring exactly one goal in each of them.

Perth Glory have never beaten Western Sydney Wanderers in the A-League and have mustered just one goal in three previous attempts (D1 L2).

There have been 19 yellow cards shown in the last three meetings between these sides (plus one red); averaging 6.3 yellows per game.

Aaron Mooy (Western Sydney Wanderers) scored his first A-League goal last season in this fixture; that goal proved the deciding factor as his side won the match 1-0.

Perth Glory have netted a league-high five goals from outside the box this season.

Both sides have kept a joint-league-high seven clean sheets so far this campaign.

No side has attempted fewer shots this term than Perth Glory (123).

Indeed, their opponents Western Sydney Wanderers have attempted the most shots (177).

Perth Glory have kept three A-League clean sheets in a row – they haven't ever kept four in succession in the competition.

Top of the Pops

Passing (Excl.Crosses)

	Accuracy	Passes
1 Mariners	82.8%	7267
2 Brisbane Roar	82.4%	8157
3 Melb Victory	82.3%	7875
4 Adelaide Utd	81.7%	7192
5 Sydney FC	79.4%	6193
6 Wanderers	78.0%	6188
7 Perth Glory	77.5%	5609
8 Phoenix	76.8%	6313
9 Melb Heart	76.1%	5395
10 Newcastle	75.7%	5309

Passes

1 Thomas Broich	(Roar)	691
2 Luke Brattan	(Roar)	596
3 James Troisi	(Victory)	588
4 Vince Lia	(Phoenix)	573
5 Matt McKay	(Roar)	542
6 Carlos Hernandez	(Phoenix)	494
7 Aaron Mooy	(Wanderers)	483
8 Isaías	(Adelaide)	475
9 Adama Traore	(Victory)	458
10 Leigh Broxham	(Victory)	455
11 Ivan Franjic	(Roar)	438
12 Mark Milligan	(Victory)	434
13 Mitch Nichols	(Victory)	425
14 Ali Abbas	(Sydney FC)	420
15 Marcelo Carrusca	(Adelaide)	388
16 Massimo Murdocca	(Heart)	387
17 Nick Montgomery	(Mariners)	382
18 Manny Muscat	(Phoenix)	382
19 Albert Riera	(Phoenix)	378
20 Marcos Flores	(Mariners)	369

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WESTERN SYDNEY WANDERERS FC

SEASON 2013/14

PHOTO: COURTESY WESTERN SYDNEY WANDERERS FC

Back row (L-R): Nick Olsen, Shannon Cole, Yianni Perkatis, Kwabena Appiah, Jason Trifiro, Tahj Minniecon, Labinot Haliti, Mateo Poljak
Middle Row (L-R): Jerome Polenz, Iacopo La Rocca, Matthew Spiranovic, Ante Covic, Jerrad Tyson, Tomi Juric, Josh Barresi, Dean Heffernan
Front Row: (L-R): Adam D'Apuzzo, Aaron Mooy, Mark Bridge, Michael Beauchamp, Tony Popovic (Head Coach), Nikolai Topor-Stanley, Shinji Ono, Youssouf Hersi, Brendon Santalab

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The Grasshopper programs have been professionally developed over this time to make sure our aims are always exceeded. In our programs, we mix fun game based skill development activities with actual small sided soccer matches and depending on the program that is suitable for your child, parental involvement is also a key element. Grasshopper Soccer provides a fun introduction to soccer whilst improving motor skills, coordination, fitness and self-confidence, as well as the social interaction and making new friends. Kids who are already soccer-mad will improve their skills and have loads of fun.
The Grasshopper Soccer programs run all year round, including 8-week term programs, Before and After School programs, Child Care programs, Holiday Camps and Birthday parties. Our programs run both indoors and outdoors and operate on weekdays and weekends.
Grasshopper Soccer's senior coach, Grasshopper Michael, says "Grasshopper Soccer promotes a healthy lifestyle, giving children the opportunity and a pathway to experience all that the world game has to offer, in a fun and safe environment. Soccer is great for children as it is a very safe sport that is team oriented and lots of fun.
I believe that a positive introduction to sport at a young age can set children up to remain fit and active for the rest of their lives."

Testimonial
"In the last couple of weeks, whilst playing Grasshopper Soccer, I have noticed a big change in my son. He has become more confident and joins in more. This Saturday just gone he wanted to stand up in front of all the kids and show them the 'Grasshopper Trick'. He would never have done that before. Thank You. Regards Ana".

Enrol your child today for a COME and TRY session and if you mention GOAL! WEEKLY you will also receive a FREE Grasshopper Soccer Water Bottle!

TERM 1 programs start from January 31st, across a number of Victorian locations and with the WORLD CUP in BRAZIL this year, NOW is the time to get your child into the World Game!

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MANCHESTER CITY TO ACQUIRE MELBOURNE HEART FC IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OWNERS OF MELBOURNE STORM

BREAKING NEWS

A consortium led by Manchester City Football Club has acquired Melbourne Heart FC effective immediately. The consortium also includes the ownership group of the Melbourne Storm as minority shareholders with a 20 percent stake.

Ferran Soriano, CEO of Manchester City, said: "We are excited about the opportunity to make Melbourne Heart one of the most successful football clubs in Australia and throughout the region. We believe the strong sports culture of Melbourne combined with the football and commercial expertise within our consortium will make for a powerful combination both on and off the pitch".

Bart Campbell, Chairman of the holding company Heart Consortium Group and Chairman of the Melbourne Storm NRL side, said: "Partnering with City to co-invest in Melbourne Heart will further strengthen the sporting landscape in one of the world's greatest cities and bring a range of new capabilities to AAMI Park. We are excited to be a part of this unique project. It is our shared ambition to replicate the model that City created with the New York Yankees around New York City FC and for both organisations to benefit as a result".

He added: "We are grateful to Peter Sidwell and his Board for creating a Club with such obvious strengths and potential."

Speaking on behalf of the exiting Board of Melbourne Heart FC, Chairman Peter Sidwell said, "The Board feels that with the successful establishment and evolution of the Club over the last four years, Melbourne Heart now stands on sound commercial and financial foundations. The Board feels that the next phase of the club's development can be most fully realised with this new investment and the associated benefits that the enthusiasm of the consortium will bring".

Regarding its plans for the Club, Ferran Soriano stated: "The first thing we must do is take the time to listen and learn and then to develop our strategy for strengthening the Club over time."

Out of respect for the coaching staff and the players in the middle of the A-League season, the new ownership group will not be making any major announcements until mid-2014.

Manchester City's investment in Melbourne Heart FC follows its establishment of New York City Football Club in May 2013, which will enter Major League Soccer in the United States in the 2015 season, and its establishment of Manchester City Women's Football Club, that will play in 2014.

In support of this expansion, City has significantly boosted its resources in scouting, coaching, human performance, football tactics and other football capabilities, most notably through its landmark City Football Academy (CFA) in Manchester, UK. Due to open in 2014, the CFA will transform the organisation's training and youth development capabilities and help it to attract the world's most promising footballers both now and in the future.

FFA APPROVES MELBOURNE HEART LICENCE ACQUISITION

Football Federation Australia (FFA) has announced that the acquisition of the Melbourne Heart licence in the Hyundai A-League by English Premier League club Manchester City and its Australian partners has been approved.

Under the terms of the transaction, the new owners will assume responsibility for all existing obligations of Melbourne Heart.

FFA CEO David Gallop said the acquisition of the Melbourne Heart licence was a huge vote of confidence in the future of the Hyundai A-League.

"Football has moved into the mainstream of Australian sport and is ideally placed to benefit from the boom in football across Asia," said Gallop.

"Manchester City and their Australian partners have made a strategic investment and I welcome them to our growing competition. It's another sign that the world is taking notice of Australian football.

"Manchester City and their partners will bring a high level of expertise in football and sports business matters and that can only strengthen the Melbourne Heart and the Hyundai A-League as a whole."

The Australian partners are also part of the ownership group of National Rugby League (NRL) club the Melbourne Storm, but the Heart and the Storm will remain separate entities.

"The arrangements we have approved will see Manchester City have an 80% share," said Gallop. "There may be some common directors between the Heart and the Storm, but we are comfortable with the plan that the Heart will be largely a separately operated business, similar to the arrangements in Newcastle with the Jets and the Knights."

Gallop has commended Manchester City and its Australian partners for their professional manner in completing the acquisition.

"The initial discussions began with our chairman Frank Lowy over a year ago in New York and we've been impressed with the clear strategic approach to the acquisition," said Gallop

"The new owners are taking a long-term view of this investment, which fits perfectly with our strategic plans for the A-League and the growth trajectory of Australian football."

An Evening With John Barnes

Former Liverpool and England legend looks back on a career that also saw him play for Watford, Newcastle United & Charlton Athletic. With 79 caps for England, two World Cup finals, 2 League Championships, 2 FA Cups and 2 hit records, he has plenty to talk about.

When: Tuesday 11th February 2014
Where: Event Cinemas Innaloo, Perth, WA
Time: 6pm
Price: $65

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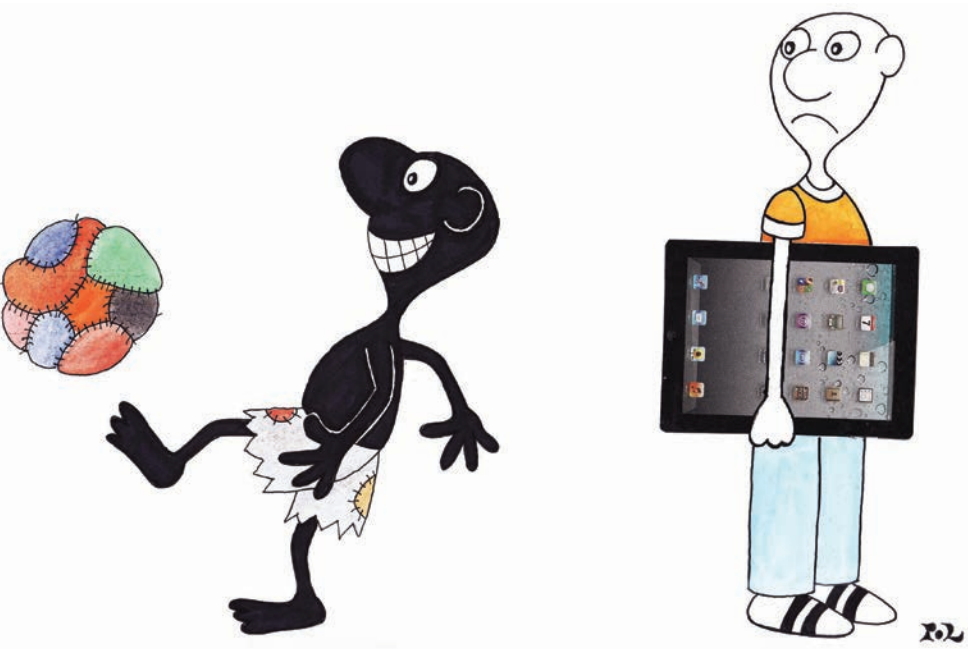
PoL's Football Funnies



Boo's World

Mark Boric

So Tom Rogic didn't end up going to Vegeta Sensai or whatever it is after all, and is back in the A-League with Melbourne Victory. To some it is a concern that he didn't get much game time at Celtic, others worry why wouldn't another European club take him on loan or why did Graham Arnold's mob say no to the proposed loan. Even by World Cup time he is still unlikely to have played more than fifty games in his professional career.

Even if he stayed at Celtic and failed to get much more game time, I stll think he'd be a certainty for the World Cup squad, especially with Robbie Kruse now ruled out through injury. Regarding his future development, I wonder would he have gained more from trying to break into the Celtic starting eleven rather than returning to the A-League where he may become a bit of a flat track bully/downhill skier?

Gary Van Egmond paid the ultimate price for having the first team to be beaten by Melbourne Heart this season, sacked on Monday to be replaced by Clayton Zane. Sydney FC fans besieged CEO Tony Pignata on Twitter demanding a similar outcome after the loss to the Mariners but so far the club is standing behind Frank Farina. Though he should be able to hear that axe being sharpened by now.

Shinji Ono will depart the League at season's end, and it is looking increasingly like Alessandro Del Piero is unlikely to be around in 2014-15 either. Is there a new crop of genuine superstar marquees on the horizon, or will marquee signings be nothing out of the box like most clubs seem to go for?

Mark Bresciano has been offered a training lifeline by Melbourne Heart whilst he serves his FIFA ban. He is allowed to play in friendlies and is considering training options in Europe where it is possible to arrange more games. Surely though the Heart could stage a game with the Goulburn Valley All Stars every week to meet his needs?

Great weekend for Ernie Merrick, as his much improved Wellington Phoenix side gave his old club Melbourne Victory a lesson to the tune of five goals to nil. Shirts were off in the Yellow Fever section, as they excitedly chanted that they wanted sex, or six, or possibly both.

Bringing you tomorrow's news today: Back in July 2010 the Socceroos went into battle at the South African World Cup against Germany, Serbia and Ghana. Meanwhile in the same week, a young hot-shot from the ACT was being featured in GW's Football Focus.

Waiting for the day someone goes all Richard Sherman on Zappers or Tara at a half-time interview. It has to happen sooner or later.If only Ljubo was still around.

TWEETS OF THE WEEK

Compiled by Roy Skillen

As a junior soccer coach there is one thing that annoys me more than most. It's not losing. It's not bratty kids kicking everybody else's ball away. It's not the times when only two kids turn up to training just because of a little drizzle and it's not refereeing (although that does come a close second). No the thing I hate most about junior coaching is the parents. Pushy interfering parents are the bane of most coaches, but they are the paying customers and we must keep our mouths respectfully closed at times, which is why I particularly liked this list.

A player's message to parents

Thanks for coming to support me today.
As my friends and I ply, I want you to remember a few things:
I am here to have fun. Please encourage me amd all the other players, no matter what team we play for.
You are representing me. Please don't embaress me by being negative, shouting or swearing.
Please don't stand too close to the pitch as this can distract me from my game and I can't conentrate properly.
There are no referess so please don't question decisions, our coaches will give us help if we need it.
Please don't coach me from the side, my coach is here to teach me and too many instructions confuse me.
I think I am doing my best and learning to play is more important than winning.
There will beno scores recorded so don't ask me the score, ask me if I had fun.
Praise me for good skills, discipline, sportsmanship and effort.
These are the tings thatmake me a real winner.
Don't criticise my mistakes, I will be scared to try things again.
Mistakes will make me a better player because I can learn from them.
Please do challenge any specatators who behave in the wrong way.
Tell them that we don't allow negative behaviour.
We all have a responsibility to look after our fantastic pitch.
Please don't bring any food or drink in the area.
I hope to make you proud of me.
Please make me proud of you too!

It has certainly been a busy week in the A-League, well in Melbourne it has. After weeks of speculation and underperforming Victory Midfielder Mitch Nichols left the club for the brighter pastures of the J-League, but was instantly replaced by Socceroos brightest prospect and biggest hope for the up coming World Cup, Tom Rogic. This was quickly followed up by the news that Brisbane Roar striker, Besart Berisha, will be moving to the blue half of Aami Park for the 2014/15 season. However, some are questioning whether this is as good news for the club as it sounds.

FIFA.com @FIFAcom
4h
Australia's Melbourne Victory @gomvfc has signed one of the #aleague's most prolific strikers, Besart Berisha - http://fifa.to/1faJqn9

TheWorldScout @AussieSoccer
2m
@gomvfc Wonder how the fiery tempers of @BesartBerisha7 and Kevin Muscat will get along next year. #implosion

Meanwhile at Melbourne Heart……

Harry Kewell @HarryKewell
Jan 20
Tried this burger challenge on the weekend.. #Failed pic.twitter.com/vgQbGFtxpg

Jason Hoffman @JHoff28
Jan 20
@HarryKewell that's a joke mate. Though your gob would fit it in :) #doesntmindachinwag

TheWorldScout @AussieSoccer
Jan 20
@JHoff28 @HarryKewell Good to see you guys fuelling your bodies in the right way #whynotpintsathalftime

Anybody who questioned Lionel Messi's brilliance after he was forced to hand over his Ballon d'or trophy to Cristiano Ronaldo last were quickly put in their place after this effort.

barcastuff @barcastuff
Jan 17
Luis Garcia (coach Getafe): "Comment on Messi's second goal? I didn't see it, he went too fast..." #fcblive

barcastuff @barcastuff
Jan 17
Luis Garcia (coach Getafe): "You can't stop Messi, he's just too good. Even if you kick him, he keeps on going and scores.

And I know last week I promised no more Manchester Utd jokes, but what the hell.

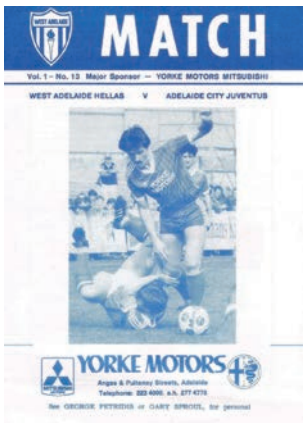
Footy banter thingy @rimsey_d
Jan 20
My source has just revealed to me the identity of #ChelseaFC #Mourinho insider I the #ManUtd camp. Shocking! #EPL pic.twitter.com/zuzK5vWtSW

Evil Kagawa @evilkagawa
Jan 20
So many chants of "MOYES OUT...MOYES OUT...MOYES OUT...MOYES OUT"

Team bus not usually so noisy! Now its time for a little nostalgia.

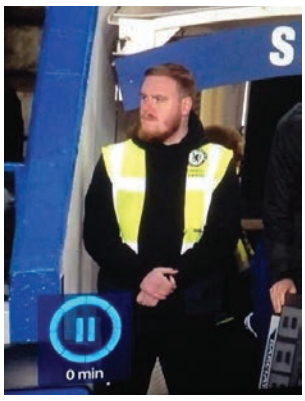
Shannon Cole @SMCole84
Jan 20
Seen this pic online. Every footballer will smile

andrew howe @AndyHowe_statto
Jan 20
@official_lesdog 1984 Adelaide derby match day program cover pic.twitter.com/PAMM1EDDnf



Oh yeah and when did Wayne Rooney join Chelsea as a steward?

101 Great Goals @101greatgoals
Jan 20
Are you Rooney in disguise? Chelsea steward looked like Man United forward with a fake beard.



Juniors take Centre Stage at Futsal Oz

The junior Grand Finals were contested recently at Futsal Oz, Brunswick with high-octane action aplenty as teams vied top honours. Always a spectacle the fans were not to be disappointed with some brilliant games throughout the day showing that the future crop of Australian futsal is bright and well, with the sport set to flourish in years to come.

Mini League Grand Final
White Central Comets 2-3 Fitzroy FC

Super League Grand Final
North Melbourne FC 8-4 Brunswick

Pele U14's Grand Final
Royal Madrid 8-4 Pathetico Madrid

Neymar U16's Grand Final
Red City FC 3-4 LB Galaxy

Championship League Grand Final
Pascoe Vale Lions 5-4 Brunswick

League Two Grand Final
Inner City FC Tigers 5-4 Academia De Brasil

League One Grand Final
Big Cats 3-2 FC FINESSE (AET)

A-League
GUESS WHO 6-1 Princess Hill Kings

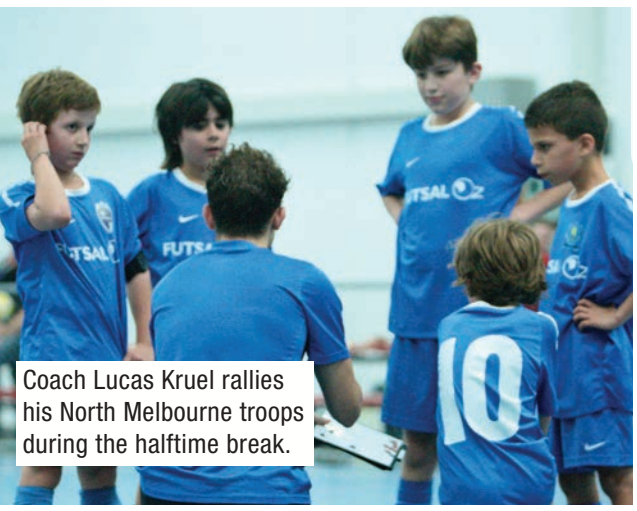
Premiership League Grand Final
Fitzroy 0-3 Barcelona Joeys

Junior State League Grand Final
Brunswick Gunners 2-0 Brunswick

Junior V-League Grand Final
Brunswick Raiders 10-1 Metro Bulls FC

Brunswick junior state league pose for a team photo after their Grand Final defeat.

Ben Holian is swarmed by his team mates following his golden goal in the final.


Coach Lucas Kruel rallies his North Melbourne troops during the halftime break.

Kaitazis celebrates in front of the crowd following his game sealing goal.

North Melbourne (Royal Blue) defeat a stubborn Brunswick side 8-4.

Guess Who (Orange) run out 6-1 winners over Princess Hill.

Nicholas Parthimos (Middle) Celebrates his opening goal in his sides grand final defeat.

Fitzroy FC after their 3-0 Grand Final defeat to Barcelona Joeys.

Welcome to FUTSAL OZ™ Our Programs

Social League competitions
- *Men's & Women's Social Leagues* — Create a team for fun weekly scheduled matches
- *Mixed Social Leagues* — Create a team with men & women (min 2 women)
- *Junior Leagues* (boys & girls) (5 to 18 year olds) — Create a team for fun weekly scheduled matches
- *Elite Leagues* (boys & girls) — Only for elite players –

Training
- *Social League training* — for teams & individuals – improve skills & fitness, including goal keeper training
- *Elite training* — high level training includes goal keeper training
- *Junior training* — from beginners to elite (see 'ALL Juniors – Boys & Girls 'from 2 years to 16 years of age')

Juniors
- *Preschool program* — Fun way to start the ball rolling during school hours (1 to 5 year olds)
- *Junior Oz Clinics* — Beginners introduction to Futsal (3 to 9 years old)
- *School Holiday Program* — Every school holidays Futsal all day training & games
- *Social Junior Leagues* — Create a team, for fun weekly scheduled matches (Mixed boys & Girls)

Elite Juniors
- *Futsal training* — INNER City FC for teams & individuals– skills, tactics & match (twice a week + match)
- *Elite Futsal League* — Join an elite Club, elite skills, technic, tactics & fitness, includes representative squads interstate and overseas tournaments.
- *Elite Futsal training* — high level training includes goal keeper training

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The river of fear for England

We continue with analysis for each group and every team participating at this year's tournament.

Suarez (Uruguay)

Buffon (Italy)

Gerrard (England)

Ruiz (Costa Rica)

Uruguay

Confederation: CONMEBOL
Nickname: Los Charruas or La Celeste
Winner: 1930, 1950
Third place: 2010
Semi-finals: 1954, 1970
Quarter-finals: 1966
Round of 16: 1986, 1990
Qualified: 12 times
Most capped player: Diego Forlan (107 games)
All-time top goal scorer: Luis Suarez (39 goals from 76 appearances)
FIFA ranking: 6

A small nation of only 3.3 million people, there is no doubt that Uruguay has consistently 'punched well above its weight' in terms of international football success including 1950 triumph. Self belief, unified purpose and being clever have resulted in a steady production line of quality football talent over many decades. Their "Garra Charrua" approach means being resourceful and daring with a never give in or up attitude.

After a wonderful WC in 2010 followed by winning its 14th South American title in 2011, there were widespread concerns about an apparent drop off in form in the first half of the CONMEBOL qualifying group games. However, faith was kept in coach Oscar Tabarez. Fifth place was eventually secured and a rampant first leg play-off performance against the hapless Jordanians secured the tie and subsequent qualification.

Although they have strengths right across the park, it is Liverpool's Luis Suarez (39 goals from 76 games) that is most exciting the football world and "Los Charruas". The main strike partners options are the veteran Diego Forlan (36 goals and a record 107 caps) from Internacional in Brasil and 26 year-old Edinson Cavani (20 goals from 60 games) of Paris Saint-Germain.

Key influences in midfield include the left-sided Cristian Rodriguez (8 goals from 70 appearances) from Atletico Madrid and the more defensive Diego Perez (87 caps and two goals) of Bologna.

The defensive stability and leadership comes from captain Diego Lugano (from West Bromwich Albion) with 91 caps and 9 goals, complemented by Benfica's Maxi Pereira (87 games and three goals) as right back.

Uruguay should flourish in the challenging conditions. Their confidence, brilliance and resilience could well set up a campaign that once again goes well into the knock out stages.

Costa Rica

Confederation: CONCACAF
Nicknames: Los Ticos
Best finish: Round 16 in 1990
Qualified: 4 times
Most capped player: Walter Centeno (137 times with 24 goals)
All-time top goalscorer: Rolando Fonseca (47 goals in 113 games)
FIFA ranking: 31

In the final group stage, Costa Rica achieved qualification with two games to spare and eventually finishing a clear second, which included a 3-1 home win over USA. They followed up with a brief visit "down under" for a 0-1 loss to our Socceroos, and hardly looked like a 31st ranked team in the world.

Costa Rica could well struggle at Brasil 2014, especially following the international retirement in 2010-2011 of two of their most ever celebrated, influential and successful players in Walter Centeno and Rolando Fonseca.

Of the likely squad, key players include 28 year old left sided midfielder and captain Bryan Ruiz (PSV in Holland) with 61 caps and 12 goals. It will be interesting to see if Wellington Phoenix's Carlos Hernandez (6 goals from 36 games) will make the final squad and see game time in Brasil. Despite resurgent recent form in the A-League and selection for national team friendlies played later this month, he may have to play second fiddle to Celso Borges (58 appearances and 13 goals) from Sweden's AIK.

Up front the main options include Joel Campbell (8 goals from 30 appearances) of Olympiacos and Alvaro Saborio (31 goals and 92 caps) of Real Salt Lake in the MLS.

Attacking left wing back Bryan Oviedo (Everton) with 26 international appearances and one goal provides great versatility, while Michael Umana (78 caps and one goal) from Deportivo Saprissa in Costa Rica is a central defensive anchor.

Costa Rica will not be disadvantaged by conditions in Brasil, and two games in the tropical north will almost mirror the climate back in their homeland. However, it hard to see them getting favourable results against either Italy or Uruguay and by that point even an unlikely success against England would probably not be enough.

England

Confederation: UEFA
Nickname: The Three Lions
Winner: 1966
Semi-finals: 1990
Quarter-finals: 1954, 1962, 1970, 1986, 2002, 2006
Round of 16: 1998, 2010
Qualified: 14 times
Most capped player: Peter Shilton (125 games)
All-time top goal scorer: Bobby Charlton (49 goals from 106 games)
FIFA ranking: 13

It could be argued that the last great team to represent England was the squad managed by Bobby Robson, and which did so well at Italy 90. It seems like expectations ever since that near miss has on the whole been unrealistic and predictions for success often grossly exaggerated.

More balanced perspectives and critical analyses have acknowledged that England is no longer producing enough of the types of players to compete with the very best in world football. Current manger Roy Hodgson has been given the daunting task of making do within the context of such technical limitations and available player talent. This has been made all the more difficult by the serious injury of Theo Walcott, ruling him out of Brasil 2014.

Although England topped their qualification group, much of the football was hardly inspiring and subsequent friendlies included a 0-2 loss at Wembley when comprehensively outplayed by Chile.

Captain Steven Gerrard (21 goals from 108 appearances) of Liverpool and veteran Frank Lampard (Chelsea) with 29 goals and 103 caps provide the midfield 'engine room' and reliable supporting attacking options.

Up front, there is no doubt that in Manchester United's Wayne Rooney (38 goals from 88 games) England have a genuine world class striker. The 28 year-old will need to be at his very best in June, especially with Walcott's absence. Just who fills the gap left by the latter is still uncertain.

Central defence may be a vulnerable area on the park, following the international retirement in recent years of both Rio Ferdinand and John Terry. Chelsea's Ashley Cole (106 caps) is one of the best left backs in international football.

England will find the conditions in Brasil very challenging. Hodgson had raised concerns about playing in tropical venues, and the subsequent draw helped to deliver his worst fear of an Amazon River 'adventure' for the opening game against a four-time WC winner.

Italy

Confederation: UEFA
Nickname: Azzurri
Winner: 1934, 1938, 1982, 2006
Runners up: 1970, 1994
Semi-finals: 1978, 1990
Quarter-finals: 1998
Round of 16: 1986, 2002
Qualified: 18 times
Most capped player: Gianluigi Buffon (138 games)
All-time top goal scorer: Luigi Riva (35 goals from 42 appearances)
FIFA ranking: 7

The Azzurri have one of the best records of European nations at World Cup (WC) finals held in the Americas. Seems like they tend to thrive in finals venues played in hotter weather conditions, and the latter will again be the context for all three of their group games.

While previously often criticised for not playing the most entertaining brand of football, this current Italian squad is stacked full of world class talent and experience. They comfortable topped their qualifying group and made the semi-finals of the 2013 Confederations Cup in Brasil. Guided by head coach Cesare Prandelli, this included some fine attacking football and scoring 10 goals over five matches culminating with a third place play-off victory over Uruguay in Salvador.

There surely can be no greater leader in international football than captain and goal keeping legend Gianluigi Buffon from Juventus, who is Italy's most capped player ever. Key players up front include the enigmatic and unpredictable Mario Balotelli (29 goals and 12 caps) of Milan and Genoa's Alberto Gilardino (19 goals from 57 appearances).

Greatest influence in midfield is the playmaking by Andrea Pirlo of Juventus, a veteran with 102 appearances and 13 goals. Defensive stability includes Juve teammate Giorgio Chiellini a versatile centre back with 67 caps and four goals. Also, Ignazio Abate (17 caps and one goal) of Milan provides extra attacking dimension from a right wing back position.

Although all three games are in the humid tropical-equatorial zone, Italy should adapt well to the conditions.

Group D

Costa Rica
England
Italy
Uruguay

The Schedule

Uruguay vs Costa Rica
14 June in Fortaleza

England vs Italy
14 June in Manaus

Uruguay vs England
19 June in Sao Paulo

Italy vs Costa Rica
20 June in Recife

Costa Rica vs England
24 June in Belo Horizonte

Italy vs Uruguay
24 June in Natal

Pablo's Synopsis

Italy will be slightly favoured to top the group, however they could be pushed 'right down to the wire' by Uruguay. It will be no surprise if this position is not clear until the final whistle in Natal on 24 June. Both teams will have benefitted greatly from participation at last year's Confederations Cup and have a much better record at World Cup finals tournaments than their main rival.

England face a mammoth task to progress, and their opening game is a 'must not lose' assignment. They will be well outside their comfort zone in the Brasilian conditions and hope rather expectation will be probably be the predominant attitude or thinking of officials and supporters.

Costa Rica may struggle to make any impact unless they can spring a surprise win over one of the top two ranked teams.

Pablo's Predictions

1. Italy
2. Uruguay
3. England
4. Costa Rica

English Premier League

Nick Amies

Eto'o gives United the Blues...again

The festive period is beginning to take its toll on potential title challengers, with the flurry of fixtures causing the likes of Everton, Liverpool and Manchester United to drop points. Both Merseyside outfits drew to mid table opponents in the shape of West Brom (1-1) and Aston Villa (2-2) respectively whilst United were thoroughly beaten by Jose Mourinho's Chelsea.

Despite David Moyes' men having the better of the opening exchanges they missed the experience of Rooney and van Persie up front, with Danny Welbeck and Adnan Januzaj struggling to make any sort of impact upon the Chelsea defence.

Samuel Eto'o opened up the scoring just after the quarter of an hour mark, finding the back of the net with the help of Michael Carrick's outstretched leg. The Cameroonian international added completed his hat-trick with goals either side of half time to put the game beyond reach for United; who never looked like threatening a comeback even after Javier Hernandez grabbed a late consolation.

Club captain Nemanja Vidic, who was also sent off late in the game for a challenge, admitted in the wake of the match that any aspirations of retaining the title this season are over.

"I think we are too far behind and we have to focus now on the top three or four," conceded the Serbian defender, affirming what many of us had already surmised weeks ago.

The news was far better in North London though as Arsenal continued their stint at the top of the ladder with a 2-0 win over Fulham at the Emirates. A brace from the brilliant Santi Cazorla was enough for the Gunners, who maintain a one point advantage over Manchester City after the Sky Blues broke the 100-goal barrier for the season in their 4-2 victory against Cardiff City.

City's title assault gained further momentum with the late cameo of Sergio Aguero, marking his first league appearance in over a month with a goal as he returns from injury. His strike eleven minutes from time was the icing on the cake for Manuel Pellegrini, who has the rather enviable dilemma of choosing between Aguero and the free-scoring duo of Alvaro Negredo and Edin Dzeko, both of whom excelled in the Argentine's absence.

Their success came at a cost to Cardiff however; who dropped to the bottom of the table after Crystal Palace snatched a one-nil win over Stoke City, sweet revenge for manager Tony Pulis against the club that dismissed him last season.

Jason Puncheon's winner from the penalty spot means that Palace jump all the way to sixteenth in a congested bottom half that could see anyone fall into the bottom three on a bad run of form. Just six points separate Villa in tenth place from the bottom, further intensifying the pressure upon the managers who are yet to receive the sack this campaign.

One man who may be feeling the heat is Swansea's Michael Laudrup after the Welsh side slumped to their eighth game in a row without a win; going down 3-1 to Tim Sherwood's rejuvenated Spurs. Hailed as the new messiah last season as the Swans won hearts and European football with their scintillating football, the Dane has been found wanting with tactical versatility in the face of a potential relegation battle.

EPL Preview

David Moyes will have a chance to redeem himself in front of the home fans as United entertain Cardiff City, also marking Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's return to the ground that cemented his status as a household name in English football.

A result matching the side's earlier encounter in Wales would do little to alleviate the pressure on the Red Devils and open the door for Newcastle United to leapfrog them on the ladder. The Magpies travel to Norwich, who snapped their winless run against Hull on the weekend. Alan Pardew's men got back to winning ways last week against the Hammers and will be looking to build some momentum in a push for the Europa League places.

Another side who had been harbouring European aspirations is Southampton, but Mauricio Pochettino's side has faltered under pressure and fallen to ninth. They welcome the table-topping Gunners to St. Mary's this week and will be hoping to erase the demons of their 2-nil defeat at the Emirates that started their slide down the table.

Arsenal will need yet another victory if they are to stay at the Premier League summit, with fellow title aspirants Chelsea having a very winnable game at home to West Ham. Given his side's tendency to take maximum points at Stamford Bridge Jose Mourinho would be confident of maintaining pressure on their cross-town rivals.

Title favourites Manchester City have a more difficult prospect however as they visit a revitalized Tottenham at White Hart Lane. Tim Sherwood has notched five wins and a draw in the league since taking over, and his players will be determined to exact revenge on their opponents for their thrashing at the Etihad earlier in the season.

The round's four remaining fixtures pit the bottom half strugglers against each other as Swansea welcome Fulham to the Liberty Stadium, Tony Pulis' Crystal Palace look to secure back-to-back wins over Hull, Sunderland and Stoke City contest a battle of stripes at the Stadium of Light and Christian Benteke looks to continue his revival in a Midlands derby between Aston Villa and West Brom.

A Samuel Eto'o hat-trick keeps Chelsea in the title hunt and piles the misery on Man Utd.

ENGLAND EPL

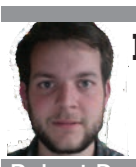
	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Arsenal	22	16	3	3	43	19	+24	51	W W W W W
2 Manchester City	22	16	2	4	63	25	+38	50	W W W W W
3 Chelsea	22	15	4	3	43	20	+23	49	W W W W W
4 Liverpool	22	13	4	5	53	28	+25	43	D W W L L
5 Tottenham Hotspur	22	13	4	5	29	26	+3	43	W W W W D
6 Everton	22	11	9	2	35	20	+15	42	D W D W L
7 Manchester United	22	11	4	7	36	27	+9	37	L W L W W
8 Newcastle United	22	11	3	8	32	28	+4	36	W L L L W
9 Southampton	22	8	7	7	29	25	+4	31	D W L L W
10 Aston Villa	22	6	6	10	22	29	-7	24	D L W D L
11 Hull City	22	6	5	11	22	28	-6	23	L L L W L
12 Norwich City	22	6	5	11	18	35	-17	23	W L D L L
13 West Bromwich ...	22	4	10	8	24	29	-5	22	D L W D D
14 Stoke City	22	5	7	10	22	36	-14	22	L L D L L
15 Swansea City	22	5	6	11	27	33	-6	21	L L L D L
16 Crystal Palace	22	6	2	14	14	31	-17	20	W L D L W
17 Fulham	22	6	1	15	22	48	-26	19	L L W L W
18 West Ham United	22	4	6	12	22	33	-11	18	L W L D L
19 Sunderland	22	4	6	12	21	36	-15	18	D W L D W
20 Cardiff City	22	4	6	12	17	38	-21	18	L L L D L

Latest Results	Next Match
Sunderland 2 - 2 Southampton	Man Utd v Cardiff City
Arsenal 2 - 0 Fulham	Norwich City v Newcastle
Crystal Palace 1 - 0 Stoke City	Southampton v Arsenal
Man City 4 - 2 Cardiff City	Swansea City v Fulham
Norwich City 1 - 0 Hull City	Crystal Palace v Hull City
West Ham 1 - 3 Newcastle	Liverpool v Everton
Liverpool 2 - 2 Aston Villa	Aston Villa v WBA
Swansea City 1 - 3 Tottenham	Sunderland v Stoke City
Chelsea 3 - 1 Man Utd	Chelsea v West Ham
WBA 1 - 1 Everton	Tottenham v Man City

One To Watch This Weekend...

It's a battle of the entertainers as Everton travels to Anfield for the Merseyside derby. The season's earlier fixture at Goodison Park ended as a thrilling 3-all draw and given the recent efforts of both teams in front of goal this campaign a similar scoreline is not out of the question.

The Curious Case Of Papiss Demba Cissé



London Eye

Robert Davis

A lot of baggage comes with the arrival of a big money signing in the January transfer window. Overpriced? Out of form? A financial risk? Everyone has their preconceptions concerning incoming players during the middle of a season as teams try to save their season from relegation or mid-table obscurity. For those towards the top of the table, a new signing could be the difference between European qualification or a failed campaign.

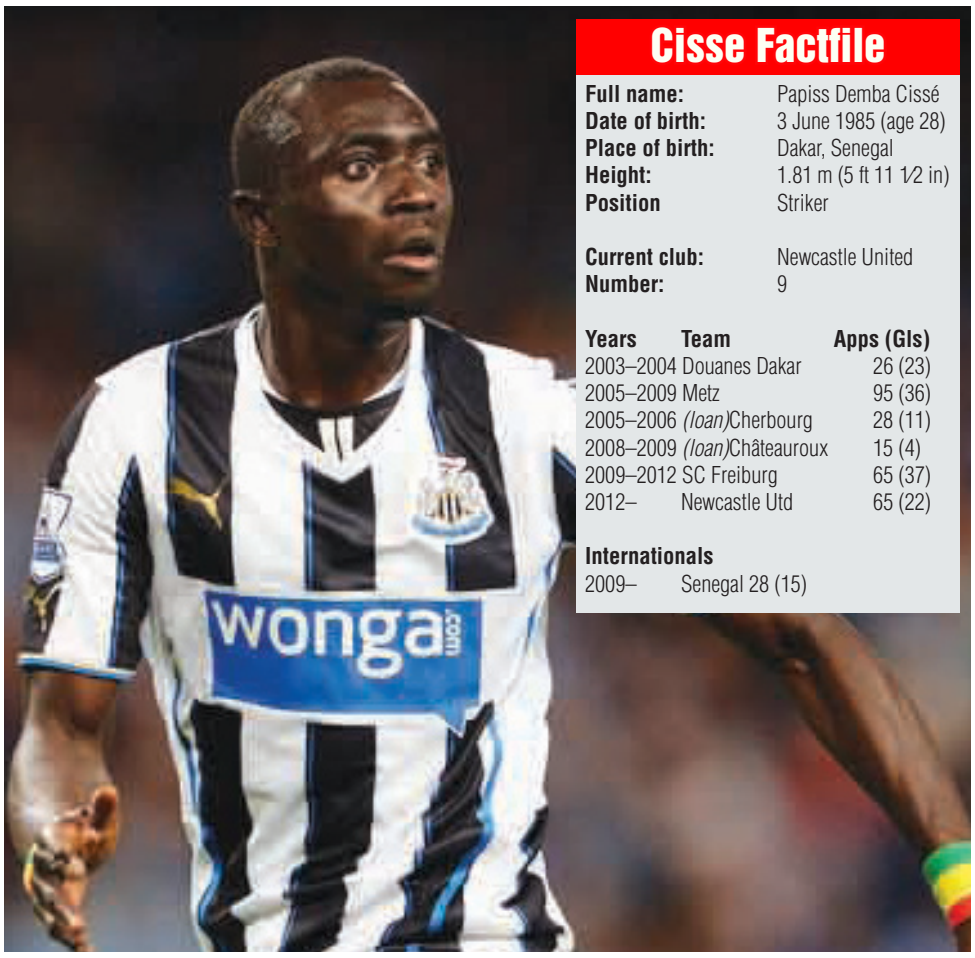
This week marks the two year anniversary of what was almost one of the greatest winter market deals in recent history. Papiss Demba Cissé arrived at Newcastle United as a relatively unknown £9million signing from Bundesliga side Freiburg in the 2012 January window. For the next four to five months after his arrival, fans of the Premier League witnessed some of the most composed, outrageous and next to impossible goals ever scored by one player.

The downright ridiculous strike away at Chelsea from the Senegal international will be a YouTube highlight for years to come along with Didier Drogba's bemused shake of the head after the ball dropped into the net. But it was the amount of times he left the jaws of supporters dropped that endeared him to not only the St James' Park faithful, but every other supporter in the country. His debut pile-driver against Aston Villa and a chip into the top corner from eight yards against Swansea City also deserve the replay treatment.

That season ended with the man in the iconic black and white striped number nine shirt scoring 13 goals from 14 games as he set himself up to become a real star turn for the Magpies in the 2012/2013 season. Things didn't quite go to plan though. A return of eight goals from 36 league appearances from Cissé coincided with a poor season for Newcastle with a 30-yard volley against Southampton a rare hark back to the previous term.

So where did it all go horribly wrong for a player who promised so much? This season has seen Cissé play second fiddle to Loic Remy as reports circle that manager Alan Pardew may move the Senegalese man on. Remy, on loan from Queens Park Rangers, has proved much more consistent in the lone striker role and any bid to purchase the French international will have to be a big one, with Cissé more than likely to make way.

Like many strikers of Cissé's style, he thrives on confidence and somewhere along the way, he lost it. Gone are the snap decisions and quick-thinking strikes that epitomised his early Newcastle career and in has crept doubt and hesitation, a forward's worst nightmare. Pressure may have been an element in the front man's loss of form as he was placed with the goal-scoring burden of firing the Toon up the league. Pardew shifted Demba Ba out wide, making Cissé the focal point of the team, before his Senegalese strike partner was eventually sold to Chelsea in January of 2012. Wearing that number nine shirt in front of 50,000 screaming Geordies certainly carries its own sense of pressure alone as well.



Cisse Factfile

Full name:	Papiss Demba Cissé
Date of birth:	3 June 1985 (age 28)
Place of birth:	Dakar, Senegal
Height:	1.81 m (5 ft 11 1⁄2 in)
Position	Striker
Current club:	Newcastle United
Number:	9

Years	Team	Apps (Gls)
2003–2004	Douanes Dakar	26 (23)
2005–2009	Metz	95 (36)
2005–2006	*(loan)*Cherbourg	28 (11)
2008–2009	*(loan)*Châteauroux	15 (4)
2009–2012	SC Freiburg	65 (37)
2012–	Newcastle Utd	65 (22)

Internationals

2009–	Senegal	28 (15)

The crowd at St.James' Park haven't lost faith in the former Metz striker though and he'll usually get the biggest cheer of the day if he manages to make an appearance from the bench. Their adoration was proven earlier in the season when he was handed the ball after a penalty had been awarded against Stoke City in the 80th minute. With Newcastle already 4-1 up, the supporters were universal in applauding Cissé as he stepped up to take the spot-kick, which he converted confidently into the top corner.

But that's exactly what the striker has had to feed from so far this term. Charity penalty's when the game is dead and buried and cup matches, providing just three goals in all competitions so far. It would be a huge shame to see a player that showed such star-quality in his first months of his time in the Premier League slowly fade away. A move to the Qatar Stars League with Al Rayyan in the window is becoming a depressing reality.

Cissé is on the verge of being listed in the same bracket as so many other overseas stars that promised so much in their respective early careers in the Premier League. Amr Zaki gained the nickname 'the Egyptian Shearer' from his chairman at Wigan Atheltic Dave Whelan as he smashed in ten goals in his first few months on loan with the Latics. It all went downhill from then though as manager Steve Bruce labelled him 'the most unprofessional player he had ever worked with'. Wigan didn't take up the option of signing him permanently.

What about José Antonio Reyes? Arsenal and Arsene Wenger dug deep into their pockets and paid Sevilla around £10million for the Spaniard who scored twice on his debut against London rivals Chelsea, his first a 20-yard thump into the top corner. A similar story unfolded as his spell in North London soon dwindled out and he was moved back to Spain where he endured another unsuccessful period at Real Madrid.

So as it continually looks like Cissé's time in England will soon be coming to an anti-climatic ending, let us just think of what could have been from someone who produced some of the most stunning goals in Premier League history in the space of four months. But whilst he's still available to play over on these shores, let's hope he can return to the form that was once the talk of the footballing world. Because let's face it, everyone likes a wonder goal.

Couch Potato * ALL TIMES ARE AEDT

SETANTA SPORTS

FRIDAY 24TH JANUARY
Bundesliga Round 18 Preview Show 7:00pm 1st Airing
Capital One Cup Semi-Final 2nd Leg Highlights Show 9:50pm 1st Airing

SATURDAY 25TH JANUARY
Bundesliga Round 18 Monchengladbach v Bayern Munich 6:25am LIVE
Copa Libertadores Preview Show 12:10pm 1st Airing

SUNDAY 26TH JANUARY
Bundesliga Round 18 Dortmund v Augsburg 1:25am LIVE
Bundesliga Round 18 Frankfurt v Hertha Berlin 4:25am LIVE
Bundesliga Round 18 Freiburg v Leverkusen 6:30am 1st Airing
Scottish Premiership Round 24 Hibernian v Celtic 11:40pm LIVE

MONDAY 27TH JANUARY
Bundesliga Round 18 Hamburg v Schalke 3:25am LIVE
Bundesliga Round 18 Werder Bremen v Braunschweig 5:30am 1st Airing
Bundesliga Round 18 Highlights Show 7:00pm 1st Airing

TUESDAY 28TH JANUARY
Sky Bet League One Round 28 TBC v TBC 6:40am LIVE
Scottish Premiership Round 24 Dundee United v St Johnstone 6:40am LIVE

WEDNESDAY 29TH JANUARY
Scottish Premiership Round 24 Highlights Show 7:00pm 1st Airing

THURSDAY 30TH JANUARY
Bundesliga Round 17 Stuttgart v Bayern Munich 5:55am LIVE
Copa Libertadores First Stage 1st Leg Deportivo Quito v Botafogo 10:50am LIVE

FRIDAY 31ST JANUARY
Sky Bet Championship Round 29 Nottm Forest v Watford 6:40am LIVE
Bundesliga Round 19 Preview Show 7:00pm 1st Airing

SATURDAY 1ST FEBRUARY
Bundesliga Round 19 Braunschweig v Dortmund 6:25am LIVE
Copa Libertadores First Stage 1st Leg Highlights Show 12:10pm 1st Airing
Sky Bet Championship Round 29 QPR v Burnley 11:10pm LIVE

SUNDAY 2ND FEBRUARY
Sky Bet Championship Round 29 Teams TBC 2:00am LIVE on setantasportsplus.com
Bundesliga Round 19 Leverkusen v Stuttgart 3:20pm 1st Airing
Bundesliga Round 19 Schalke v Wolfsburg 5:10pm 1st Airing
Bundesliga Round 19 Hannover v Monchengladbach 7:00pm 1st Airing
Scottish League Cup Semi-Final Hearts v Inverness 11:10pm LIVE

MONDAY 3RD FEBRUARY
Bundesliga Round 19 Hertha Berlin v Nuremburg 4:00am 1st Airing
Bundesliga Round 19 Bayern Munich v Frankfurt 5:50am 1st Airing
Primera Division Round 1 Teams TBC 8:10am LIVE
Primera Division Round 1 Teams TBC 11:15am LIVE on setantasportsplus.com
Bundesliga Round 19 Highlights Show 7:00pm 1st Airing

FOX SPORTS

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE
All times AEDT
All games LIVE unless stated

WEEK 22
Wed Jan 29 Southampton v Arsenal
6.35 am Fox 1

Wed Jan 29 Liverpool v Everton
6.50 am Fox 2

Wed Jan 29 Crystal Palace v Hull
6.35 am Viewers Choice

Wed Jan 29 Manchester United v Cardiff
6.35 am Viewers Choice

Wed Jan 29 Norwich v Newcastle
6.35 am Viewers Choice

Wed Jan 29 Swansea v Fulham
6.35 am Viewers Choice

Thu Jan 30 Chelsea v West Ham
6.35 am Fox 1

Thu Jan 30 Tottenham v Manchester City
6.35 am Fox 2

Thu Jan 30 Aston Villa v West Brom
6.35 am Viewers Choice

Thu Jan 30 Sunderland v Stoke
6.35 am Viewers Choice

HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE
ALL GAMES LIVE ON FOX 1

Fri Jan 24 Roar v Phoenix
8.00 pm Fox 1

Sat Jan 25 Adelaide v Melb Heart
5.30 pm Fox 1

Sat Jan 25 Mariners v Jets
7.45 pm Fox 1

Sun Jan 26 Victory v Sydney
5.00 pm Fox 1

Sun Jan 26 Wanderers v Glory
7.00 pm Fox 1

W-League
Fri Jan 24 Brisbane v Western Sydney
5.00 pm Fox a

SUNDAY SHOOT OUT
Every Sunday 7.00pm

SANTO, SAM & ED'S TOTAL FOOTBALL
Mondays at 7.30pm on FOX Sports 1

SPANISH LA LIGA
Sun Jan 26 Valladolid v Villarreal
3.55 am Fox 1

Sun Jan 26 Almeria v Getafe
9.55 pm Fox 1

SBS

SBS ONE
Evey Friday
7:30 pm A-League Live

Every Sunday
4:30 pm UEFA Champions League Magazine

Every Monday
4:30 pm FIFA Futbol Mundial
11:00 pm The World Game

Every Thursday
8:30 pm Thursday FC
11:00 pm UEFA Champions League Magazine

SBS TWO
Every Monday
8:40 pm A-League Highlights Show

Every Tuesday
5:00 pm A-League Highlights Show

TV Heaven

Matthew Naqvi

Remote Control

Melbourne Victory has made two massive coups this week with the loan deal for young gun Tom Rogic and striker Besart Berisha for the start of next season. This is some much needed positive news after the horrible demolition last weekend with a 5-0 loss to Wellington Phoenix. Although the two players want get the chance to play together, it is a powerful bolster to Victory's attacking stocks. Whether Victory can achieve the ultimate success this season or the next we will have to wait and see.

Friday night's A-League game between **Brisbane Roar and Wellington Phoenix** is the game to watch on SBS. Brisbane has been in slightly indifferent form and is coming off a brave nil-all draw against Perth Glory. Roar will be without Besart Berisha for this game and it could be the difference between Brisbane winning and losing.

Wellington is coming off a five game undefeated streak with four wins amongst them. They will not be afraid or nervous to go after the ladder leaders and push for the top four. Carlos Hernandez is in spectacular form and Stein Huysegems is playing in career best form, which spells trouble for Roar.

This game will be an exciting contest and Wellington may just get the upset. 3-2 for the final score line.

Sunday also delivers the Big Blue rivalry between **Melbourne Victory and Sydney FC.** This game has excitement, drama and goals written all over it.

Not much more needs to be said about this game except that it is a must watch. Victory has to respond with a vengeance after last week's debacle against Wellington; unfortunately for Sydney they will cop the wrath. Victory will prevail 3-1.

The EPL gives way to the FA Cup this weekend but resumes midweek with the pick of the bunch the Merseyside clash between **Liverpool and Everton.**

The Merseyside derbies are always great matches with both sides stepping up to get the win over their cross town rivals. The last three encounters have ended in draws and with both sides inside the top 6, this is guaranteed to be another pearler of a contest.

As always in the Merseyside clashes, expect cards, goals and plenty of drama. I predict that the red side of town will be all smiles at the end of this one, with a nice 2-1 victory to Liverpool.

ABC1 delivers a great clash in the **W-League** this Sunday at 3pm with fourth placed **Canberra United** taking on seventh placed **Perth Glory.** Canberra will be hoping to continue to push the top three teams while Perth is simply trying to get some points on the board. Canberra has the edge in experience and quality and should be too strong for the Glory with a 2-0 at the end.

Once all is said and done for this round of action, tune into SBS for their analysis coverage with The A-League Highlights Show hosted by Craig Foster and The World Game on Monday night. Santo, Sam and Ed's Total Football is your go to show for comedy and football on Foxtel. Thursday FC is another option for laughs on Thursday night on SBS.

Enjoy plenty of football action this weekend and hopefully your team wins.

Katsa's Korner

George Katsamboukas

Fish n' Fits

Social Media is back in the spot light this week, for all the wrong reasons, where….

Melbourne Heart CEO Scott Munn, who's Team was without a Happy End in 11 Months, finally broke the drought against the Newcastle Jets, took to Twitter, and in particular, sent some interesting Tweets to Melbourne Victory's supporter and Master Chef, George Calombaris.

The first tweet indicated that Wellington had put five past Melbourne Victory, via a screen shot, and a message "Thought you would like this"

Munn then followed up with "in some cultures five is a lucky number"

Calombaris fired his own scud missile back with "can't believe you're a CEO of a Club and u take the piss of another. Fish rots from the head down"

Interesting action by Munn to say the least!

Over to the Harbour City we go where Sydney FC Marquee Player Del Piero's body language of late suggest that he none too happy with the goings on at his Club.

The none too pleased look he gave the Sydney FC Coaching Staff a few weeks back when he was substituted suggests that there is trouble in paradise, something that would be troubling Coach Frank Farina, as it may come to a him or me scenario, something that the Sydney Club powerbrokers will try and avoid at all costs.

Word going around however is that there is interest for Del Piero from a Club in Thailand and he may be taking up this offer next season.

Further up the coast we go to Sunny Newcastle, where Jets Coach Gary Van Egmond was shown the door, after the Jets lost to Cellar Dwellers, Melbourne Heart, 3-1 last week.

In comes Clayton Zane as the new Manager, who promises that his players would "start to fight for the fans and play with a smile of their faces".

Time will tell I guess…

Ernie Merrick must have thought that his Christmas' had all come at once last week, with Wellington Phoenix defeating the Melbourne Victory 5-0, and as the Score suggests, Victory were far from impressive.

One Punter pointed out to me that the Victory must be in some kind of good form, having defeated Western Sydney Wanderers 3-1 last week, however, that Punter did not take into consideration that WSW have lost 3 out of their last 4 Games.

Kevin Muscat is once again under the pump to turn around Melbourne Victory's fortunes and his rookie season as Manager has certainly been a baptism of fire.

Club Powerbrokers, Players and Fans alike in Victoria are eagerly awaiting the announcement of the composition of the Leagues in 2014, as applications closed for NPLV last week; the FFV will sort through these before announcing who will be playing in each league.

After last year's drawn out battle between the FFV and Clubs, it will be good to get some normality back on the Victorian Local Scene, with the focus being on what happens on the field, and not of the field.

Until next week.

This is Katsa – Just as you have known him

No heart left in this poor fella...

Victorian Premier League

Brandon Galgano

New season preparations begin

With just over two months until season kick-off, many of Victoria's top clubs have returned to the track in preparation for the first ever NPL competition in Victorian football history.

With new restrictions regarding foreign players and a brand new player points system which encourages clubs to promote young players, many of the NPL sides will be vastly different to those that turned out last season. Here is a short roundup regarding any recent news regarding the NPL clubs.

Lujic signs for Wellington

Northcote City grand final hero Milos Lujic has signed a two week deal with the Wellington Phoenix. The 2013 VPL Golden Boot winner has been snapped up by former VIS coach Ernie Merrick as a replacement for Reece Caira who is away on international duty with the Australian U22 side. Lujic is confident though that if he performs well over his two week stint then the chances of staying on for the rest of the season are high.

"I've had a good year in Victoria, so I just want to make a good impression and hopefully stay on for the rest of the year," he told NZ Newswire. "Hopefully, I get a chance to show what I can do - I've got some pace to burn, and scored a lot of goals this year in the VPL so I can put the ball in the back of the net.

"I want to give this one a real good crack."

The two week contract expires at the end of January.

Milos Lujic

Rexhepi Commits to Hume

Former Dandenong Thunder skipper and treble winner Shane Rexhepi has signed for Hume City in a major coup for the side. The experienced defender enjoyed a number of fantastic seasons at the club and described just how hard it was to leave the club at the end of last season to Humecityfc.com

"My decision to leave Dandenong was hard, I love the club and have some great mates there. I love the fans and what the club stands for, so it is always difficult to leave a place I called home for years. But the challenge of coming to a new club is very exciting, A chance for me to push the boundaries at a club with great facilities and a vision for the future."

Hume have also signed striker Nick Marinos from Victorian State League One champions Heidelberg United. The former Greece U21 youth international scored 12 goals for the Bergers in 2013 and will be looking to add that element of quality in the final third.

THEODORE AND EAGER JOIN TAYLOR AT SMFC

Former Melbourne Victory Youth Skipper Matthew Theodore and Northcote City title winning midfielder Michael Eager have joined giants South Melbourne FC for the 2014 season. Theodore signs following two fantastic seasons at Dandenong Thunder where he played under SMFC coach Christ Taylor in the 2012 treble winning side. Former Northcote city midfielder Eager also signs on with a big reputation following a fantastic 2013 season with Northcote where he picked up a Victorian Premier League title. Both signings will surely play key roles down at Lakeside this season.

A LIVING LEGEND CALLS IT A DAY

Former VPL title winner and Player of the year Fernando De Moraes has announced his retirement from football effective immediately. Affectionately known around Lakeside stadium as 'nando', De Moraes was for many years one of the star attractions of the Victorian Premier League having made 182 Career appearances for South Melbourne FC scoring 62 goals. The Futsalroo played a key role in the 2006 VPL Grand Final for Hellas in which he assisted Gianni De Nittis for the winner. De Moraes was awarded with the VPL player of the season award in 2010 and his presence will surely be missed around Lakeside stadium in 2014.

Fernando De Moraes

FFV RECEIVES 38 NPL APPLICATIONS

Football Federation Victoria (FFV) can confirm it has received 38 applications for the 2014 National Premier Leagues (NPL) of Victoria.

Applications closed at 5pm on Monday January 20, with FFV's assessment panel reviewing applications from today until Friday.

FFV will reveal the successful applicants on February 7.

COPA LIBERTADORES 2014 AT A GLANCE

Latin Wrap

Francis Fields

It is that time of year for the showpiece of event of Latin American football, the Copa Libertadores.

The first stage kicks off on the 29th of January, next Thursday AEST with a home and away series with the away goals rule and penalty shoot-out applied. Each respective leg-tie winner progresses to the second group stage and joins the remaining 26 qualified teams.

The tournament favourites and contenders for the 2014 title may vary. Holders Atlético Mineiro have boosted their chance of defending last year's crown with the extension signing of midfield maestro Ronaldinho.

Could they be capable of stringing another straight ten wins out of eleven matches as they did in last year's edition? It remains to be seen although the stakes suggest that may not be the case.

Another strong contender without a doubt is Newell's Old Boys. Sure, they may not have the same coach as last season in Gerardo Martino yet this time round players such as Gabriel Heinze, Maxi Rodríguez are having a second go at the Libertadores - a tournament both have admitted to having an immense desire in lifting the trophy and competing in it in comparison to the difficulties of playing the UEFA Champions League.

Coach Alfedo Berti is yet another disciple of Marcelo Bielsa's attacking philosophy as Newell's have boosted their creativity in midfield with Damian Manso - who performed brilliantly against Manchester United in Yokohama in the former Toyota InterContinental Cup and French star David Trézeguét from River Plate.

Vélez Sarsfield is another Argentine club always fighting for the title. Under former manager Ricardo Gareca, they missed the title in the semi-finals and such hurdles should spur them on to book a place in the final. New boss José Oscar Flores counts with a solid goalkeeper in Uruguayan Sebastián Sosa formerly at Peñarol and Boca Juniors. The defence boasts of the same consistent names from previous campaigns and it is in midfield and up front where the strength lies, especially with Federico Insúa now consistently performing upon returning home from his European stint in his third season and can provide for Mauro Zárate, Lucas Pratto and the ever-exciting Colombian Jonathan Copete.

Current Argentine champions San Lorenzo will be looking to find form and lift the Libertadores its maiden Libertadores. Having won the first edition of the Copa Sudamericana in 2002 under Manuel Pellegrini, the Gauchos de Boedo have experienced continental boss Edgardo Bauzá to command a squad having replaced Juan Antonio Pizzi to Valencia in Spain's La Liga.

Bauzá has the club's favourite son Leandro Romagnoli still peaking meanwhile with Paraguayan international hardman Néstor Ortigoza and former Boca creative man Nicolás Blandi to feed a relatively inexperienced attacking line-up nevertheless, keep an eye out.

San Lorenzo may lack in depth up front however it remains to be seen, as securing three points in all their home fixtures should ensure them passage and a strong campaign.

Cruzeiro, the current Brazilian champions are also in the running to lift the coveted trophy. Commanded by experienced midfielder Júlio Baptista and partnered by Henrique, they need to supply to both Bolivia international Marcelo Moreno Martins and Uruguayan Alejandro Martinuccio, both specifically brought in for the Libertadores alongside former Santos goalscorer Borges to deliver the goods.

The Foxes should perform really well. Coach Marcelo Oliveira is also knowledgeable and pragmatic, imposes strict discipline and has geared up a squad winning the long, arduous 2013 Brazilian title with the 2014 Libertadores in the back of their minds as a long-term objective.

Of the teams in the play-off, it is Lanús with the biggest chance to progress all the way to the final four. Colombia's Independiente Santa Fe and Atlético Nacional of Medellín can both respectively perform very strongly at home for instance, while Chile's Universidad de Chile are not the same, attacking-minded and intense as they were in winning the Copa Sudamericana of 2009. In fact, they are currently barely a shadow of that momentous season cup performance.

Brazilian giants Flamengo may surprise in the Second Group stage, as with Botafogo assuming they qualify past the Play Off stage and now without Dutchman Clarence Seedorf who took the reins at AC Milan.

Uruguay's Peñarol are strong at the intimidating Centenario stadium yet lack the cohesive creativity and consistency to go all the way.

Santos Laguna, the Mexican 2012 Clausura champions may surprise, with a solid squad and using the advantage of their intimidating home ground the Estadio Corona. The club is one of many showcasing the economic superiority of Mexican football in the continent by luring top and potential future stars to its league should be able to step-up and deliver. Mexican clubs are yet lift the trophy since its inception in 2000 as invite-only entries.

Brazil's Grêmio is also capable of going all the way. Experienced custodian Dida in goals needs no introduction to world football.

Elano is still performing at the top doing the dirty work in midfield with Zé Roberto, Paraguay's Cristián Riveros along with five other names brought in loan. Up front is Argentina's Hernán Barcos who can always command presence and is known as a goal-poacher however with the recent selling of Chile's Eduardo Vargas to Valencia, a partner up front is urgently needed.

Expect mouth-watering clashes both home and away between: Vélez Sarsfield vs Atlético Paranaense (assuming they progress) in Group 1; San Lorenzo vs Botafogo in Group 2; Newell's Old Boys vs Grêmio and Atlético Nacional in Group 6 and Peñarol vs Santos Laguna in Group 8.

Clubs need a fair share of luck in the draw, a run of results and also good form heading in. It is vitally important that in each of the club's domestic leagues form is consistent heading into the Copa Libertadores which runs from January to August due to the hosting of the FIFA 2014 World Cup.

Many clubs especially from Brazil, Mexico and Argentina bolster its squads especially for the tournament using their economic means.

Home and away legs influence heavily upon the atmospheres generated from its ever-present and passionate fans whilst the refereeing are always somewhat considered controversial, dubious, strict and at times, biased.

The Seeds for the 2nd Round

Copa Draw Qualifying Rd

1st leg - 28-30 Jan
2nd Leg - 4-6 Feb

Sporting Cristal v Atlético Paranaense
Deportivo Quito v Botafogo
Universidad de Chile v Guaraní
Caracas v Lanús
Morelia v Santa Fe
Oriente Petrolero v Nacional

COPA BRIDGESTONE LIBERTADORES

Ardiles in Car Crash

Osvaldo "Ossie" Ardiles, a World Cup winner with Argentina and former Tottenham Hotspur midfielder, is undergoing recovery in hospital after a car crash on the Falkland Islands, media reported this week.

Ardiles, 61, was in the Falklands - or "Malvinas" Islands making a television documentary about his life with friend and former Argentina and Spurs team mate Ricky Villa.

"(I am) fine and doing well," Ardiles was quoted as saying by the BBC. "The attention and care we have received from the police, the RAF helicopter team, the doctors and nurses has been world class. Thanks to everyone for your concern."

Ardiles was airlifted to the King Edward Memorial Hospital in Stanley, the Falklands' capital, following the accident.

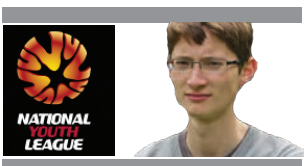
He was driving a car with several other occupants including Villa at a slow speed on a gravel road when he lost control and crashed. Villa was only shaken as he told Argentine television reporters as he commented that Ardiles requires up to 28 stitches in wounds suffered.

Villa spoke of his worry of the accident, who was also Ardiles's assistant when he was coach of Racing Club in the Argentine first division league season of 2002-03. Both players were part of the Argentina team who won the 1978 World Cup on home soil.

They then headed to London to join Spurs and were part of the side that won the 1981 FA Cup. Ardiles also helped Spurs win the UEFA Cup in 1984.

He returned to Britain where, after his retirement as a player, he forged a coaching career during which he worked in several countries, most notably Japan winning titles with Shimizu S-Pulse, Yokohama Marinos and Tokyo Verdy. Ardiles made his home in England but had a spell at Paris St Germain in the 1982-83 season after the Falklands war between Britain and Argentina. The islands' sovereignty is still disputed by the two countries.

Sky Blues continue winning ways



Tomasz Ng

Foxtel National Youth League

Sydney FC continued on their winning ways in this season's Foxtel National Youth League by securing yet another win this season, this time over the Central Coast Mariners.

Unlike most of their games this season, the Sky Blues were made to work hard against the league's bottom side, and were restricted to two goals that resulted from set pieces.

Mitch Mallia pounced on a flick on from a corner, while Chris Naumoff scored a sensational free kick to give Sydney an important 2-0 win, keeping them on top of the table and another step closer to sealing the title.

Trailing them in second place is Melbourne Victory, who got an impressive victory away to the AIS.

With a very depleted squad to choose from, Victory struggled against the more experienced Heart in last week's derby, but managed to fight against the odds to scrape a result away from home.

Barresi scores the consolation goal for Wanderers but Adelaide Utd run out 3-1 winners. Photo: ADAM BUTLER

The AIS were quick out of the blocks and went ahead through Marc Marino in the ninth minute but were rocked by a red card to Anthony Kalik late in the first half.

Victory didn't take long to make their advantage count, and went ahead through Anthony Proia in the 54th minute.

One of the fringe members of the Victory youth squad John Maclean assisted the first goal, and got a goal of his own ten minutes later as he smartly lobbed the ball over the advancing keeper, making the score 2-1 to the visitors.

Not to be deterred the AIS kept pushing to get back into the match and came closest when Mark Ochieng rattled the crossbar from a free kick.

Victory managed to soak up the pressure however and recorded a huge result considering their circumstances.

Despite beating their city rivals last week, Melbourne Heart showed no signs of continuing their good form in the dull 0-0 draw against Newcastle at Epping Stadium.

The game was devoid of many clear cut chances, but Heart did hit the crossbar through Ross Archibald late in the first half.

Newcastle also came closest to scoring early in the second half, but Radovan Pavicevic was unable to score a simple finish.

Mitchell Oxborrow had forced Tando Velaphi into a good save on the first attempt, and quickly positioned himself to just prevent Pavicevic's shot from crossing the line.

It was as good as the game got however, and it ended in a result that did no favours for either side with the results elsewhere.

Adelaide United kept up their chase to second place when they beat the Western Sydney Wanderers 3-1 at Thebarton Oval.

The visitors actually thought they had the lead in the first half when last week's four-goal hero Mark Cindric had the ball in the back of the net, but it was deemed to be offside.

Anthony Costa then turned on the style as he scored a free kick shortly after the break then notched a second a few minutes later from close range.

Nikola Milesunic then made it 3-0 before Joshua Barresi grabbed a late consolation for the Wanderers who were completely outdone in the second half.

Having beaten the Reds last week, Brisbane Roar continued their winning run against a hapless Perth Glory outfit who were comprehensively beaten 5-0.

Brisbane were actually one of two sides to have lost to Perth this season, with that match ending in a 7-2 defeat.

Jai Ingham and Brandon Borrello had revenge on their minds however as they both grabbed a brace while Samuel Sibatuara scored one of his own.

Perth actually finished the game with just nine men, with Alexander Castiello sent off in the 12th minute and Mark Barnett in the 74th.

The Glory are now close to bringing up a half century in goals conceded, and need to improve soon if they are to avoid last place to the much improved Mariners.

Results

Sydney FC 2 (Mitch Mallia 33', Chris Naumoff 36')
Central Coast Mariners 0

AIS 1 (Marc MARINO 9')
Melbourne Victory 2 (Anthony PROIA 54', John MACLEAN 63')

Melbourne Heart 0
Newcastle Jets 0

Perth Glory 0
Brisbane Roar 5 (Ingham 13m pen, 78m pen, Borrello 20m, 29m, Sibatuara 64m)

Adelaide United 3 (Costa 48, 62, Mileusnic 74)
Western Sydney Wanderers 1 (Barresi 82)

Adelaide United 3 (Costa 48, 62, Mileusnic 74)
Western Sydney Wanderers 1 (Barresi 82)

Next Round

Saturday, 25 January 2014
Brisbane Roar v AIS
Goodwin Park
KO 11:30 AM

Saturday, 25 January 2014
Perth Glory v Newcastle Jets
Intiga Stadium
KO 1:30 PM

Sunday, 26 January 2014
Adelaide United v Melbourne Heart
Parra Hills
KO 3:00 PM

Sunday, 26 January 2014
Mariners v Wanderers
Centre of Excellence, Tuggerah
KO 3:00PM

Monday, 27 January 2014
Melbourne Victory v Sydney FC
Lakeside Stadium
KO 3:00PM

NYL Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	P
1 Sydney FC	12	11	0	1	41	14	27	33
2 Melbourne Victory	12	7	1	4	33	22	11	22
3 Newcastle Jets	12	6	3	3	26	19	7	21
4 Adelaide United	12	6	2	4	28	24	4	20
5 Brisbane Roar	12	5	4	3	33	31	2	19
6 Wanderers FC	12	5	1	6	26	21	5	16
7 Melbourne Heart	12	4	3	5	15	20	-5	15
8 AIS	12	4	2	6	28	35	-7	14
9 Perth Glory	12	2	0	10	18	49	-31	6
10 CC Mariners	12	1	2	9	14	27	-13	5

Photos: GEORGE MARIN

Sydney FC on top after Victory draw with Wanderers

By Katie Lambeski

With finals just around the corner, Perth Glory scored a badly needed win, Canberra United got back on track, Sydney FC flexed their muscles and Melbourne Victory kicked off with Western Sydney for the second time in three weeks.

Despite having to fight back after falling behind early, Perth Glory flew past Newcastle Jets to win 3-2 on Saturday at Percy Doyle Reserve. Elisa D'Ovidio, Marianna Tabain and Rosie Sutton cancelled out opening goals from Tara Andrews and Sophie Nenadovic to spare any Glory blushes. The slow start from the hosts was capitalised on by the visitors, as Perth wasted little time fighting back.

Despite losing Hannah Beard early, the Jets weren't fazed and went up on the 20th minute through Andrews, who seized on teammate Rahli Dobson's pass for a neat finish. Dobson lead most of the Jets' attacks and made it count she her pass played through Nenadovic, her low shot beat Perth keeper Chantel Jones. Just minutes after, a long range shot from D'Ovidio was unstoppable and got the ball rolling for the unlikely Glory comeback. Sutton nailed the equalizer just moments before the half-time whistle to set up a tantalising second 45. In a half that saw both have chances to win, Perth's Marianna Tabain had the final say when she found space to direct her shot to the left side.

Canberra got their revenge on the upstart Adelaide, making up for their loss to the Lady Reds two weeks ago. Canberra got back into form after their controversial loss to Melbourne Victory the week prior, while Adelaide came down to earth after their impressive run of results. Michelle Heyman, Stephanie Ochs and Ashleigh Sykes' goals ensured Canberra left McKellar Park with three points in tow. Canberra looked the better of the contestants throughout, which is not to say Adelaide didn't have their moments in attack.

The Lady Reds best football came at the start of both halves as they made Canberra wary of conceding, perhaps as a result of their win in the earlier fixture. Heyman put the 'Green Machine' ahead at the twelfth minute, poking home from a goalmouth scramble. Heyman was prominent again in the second goal too, crossing back to Ochs who made no mistake finding the net at the thirty-second minute. The deficit proved too much for Adelaide to overcome, as the exciting Sykes put the exclamation mark on the scoreline at the sixty-first minute, her classy finish ending the game at 3-0.

Sydney FC kept their unbeaten run intact in dominant fashion at the weekend, making light work of Brisbane Roar in a 4-0 win at Sydney United Sport Centre on Sunday. Jodie Taylor kept in 'scoring when she wants' form with a brace, with Emma Kete and Leena Khamis adding goals of their own to the rout. The visitors never got a look in, as Sydney had the door shut by half-time as they led 3-0.

Women's Ballon D'Or winner Nadine Angerer was left on the bench, as a result of her trip to Zurich, but it wouldn't have helped much as Sydney's speed, movement and defence was far superior on the day. A poaching Kete header at the eighteenth minute opened the scoring, which was added on to just two minutes after by a close range shot and goal from Khamis after the striker was played through by Kete. Alen Stajcic's side was in no mood for mercy after sub Taylor was introduced late in the half and nabbed the first of hers and Sydney's third just before half-time.

Picking up where they left off three weeks ago, Western Sydney and Melbourne Victory played out a tense 1-1 draw in Campbelltown. An own goal (via Wanderer Linda O'Neill) had Victory 1-0 up just after the half-hour mark and they looked likely to take all three points until Jess Seaman equalized just before the full-time whistle. Much like their bout with Adelaide last week, left it late but no less great.

Western Sydney had the strongest chances early on, both through Michelle Carney, although one would miss and the other kept out through Victory keeper Bri Davey. Throughout the match, both had chances to take, and it was Victory who struck first. A Lisa de Vanna shot was denied through Dimi Poulos, only to be parried onto O'Neill and into the net. Both sides would trade blows during the rest of the second half, coming close to winners. A smash and grab long range shot from Seaman earning the Wanderers a hard-fought point.

The Wanderers celebrate after Jess Seaman snatched a late equaliser against Melbourne Victory.

Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	P
1 Sydney FC	8	6	2	0	30	8	22	20
2 Melbourne Victory	9	6	2	1	19	9	10	20
3 Brisbane Roar	9	5	1	3	17	13	4	16
4 Canberra United	8	5	0	3	14	5	9	15
5 Adelaide United	9	3	2	4	8	10	-2	11
6 Wanderers	9	2	3	4	13	15	-2	9
7 Perth Glory	9	3	0	6	13	25	-12	9
8 Newcastle Jets	9	0	0	9	7	36	-29	0

Next Round

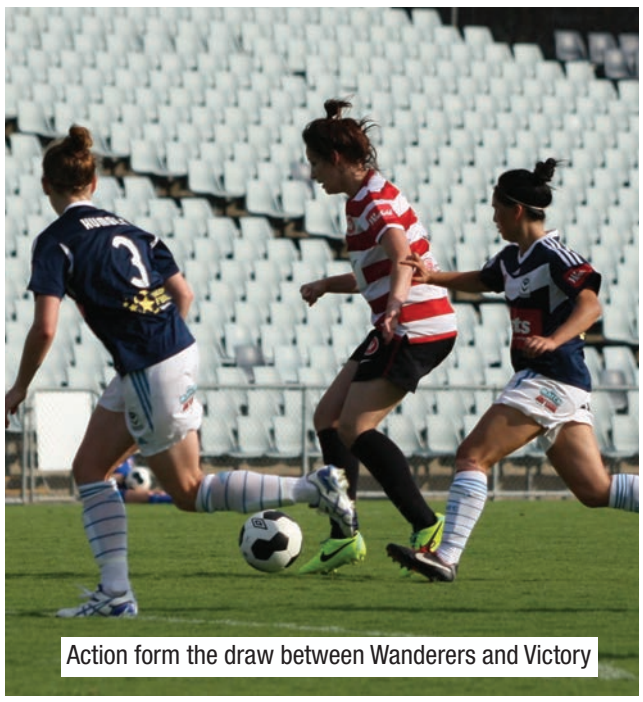
24 Jan 14 4:00pm
Brisbane Roar Vs Wanderers
Suncorp Stadium

24 Jan 14 8:00pm
Adelaide United Vs Sydney FC
The Shores

25 Jan 14 11:00am
Newcastle Jets Vs Melb Victory
Adamstown Oval

26 Jan 14 3:00pm
Canberra United Vs Perth Glory
McKellar Park

Victory keeper Brianna Davey is at full stretch but can't stop the ball from flying into the net.



Action form the draw between Wanderers and Victory

Round 9 Review

Perth Glory 3 (Elisa D'ovidio 31', Rosie Sutton 45+3', Marianna Tabain 67')
Newcastle Jets 2 (Tara Andrews 20', Sophie Nenadovic 28')
Saturday 18 January 2014
Percy Doyle Reserve, Perth
Referee: Kirralee Andruschak

Perth Glory: Chantel Jones (Gk), Cecilie Sandvej, Bronwyn Studman, Shannon May, Rosie Sutton, Kate Gill, Elisa D'ovidio (Amy Knights 85'), Thia Eastman, Marianna Tabain, Shawn Billam (Ella Mastrantonio 58'), Christina Julien (Jess Dillon 90')
Substitutes – Gabrielle Dal Busco (Gk)
Cautions – BroNwyn Studman 50'

Newcastle Jets: Eliza Campbell (Gk), Hannah Brewer, Siahn Bozanic, Ciara Mccormick, Gema Simon, Tara Andrews, Rhali Dobson (Lauren Brown 82'), Hannah Beard (Ashley Spina 10'), Sophie Nenadovic, Cassidy Davis, Clare Wheeler (Stacey Day 70')
Substitutes – Claire Coelho (Gk)
Cautions – None

Canberra United 3 (Michelle Heyman 15', Stephanie Ochs 32', Ashleigh Sykes 61')
Adelaide United 0
Sunday 19 January 2014
Mckellar Park, Canberra
Referee: Casey Reibelt

Canberra United: Lydia Williams (Gk), Catherine Brown, Kendall Fletcher, Ellie Brush, Caitlin Munoz (Grace Gill 62'), Michelle Heyman, Sally Rojahn, Nicole Sykes, Ashleigh Sykes (Meg Mclaughlin 66'), Lori Lindsey, Stephanie Ochs (Georgia Yeoman-Dale 80')
Substitutes – Trudy Burke (Gk)
Cautions – Ellie Brush 75'

Adelaide United: Melissa Barbieri (Gk), Alexandra Gummer (Tegan Riding 68'), Laura Stockdale, Rachael Quigley, Lisa-Marie Woods (Emily Condon 46'), Monique Iannella (Jessie Wharepouri 73'), Daila-Tais Borg, Jenna Mccormick, Tiarn POwell, Snez Veljanovska, Kristy Moore
Substitutes – Kelly Barltrop (Gk)
Cautions – Jenna Mccormick 28'

Western Sydney Wanderers 1 (Jess Seaman 85')
Melbourne Victory 1 (Linda O'neill 34' O.G.)
Sunday 19 January 2014
Campbelltown Stadium, Sydney
Referee: Kelly Jones

Western Sydney Wanderers: Dimi Poulos (Gk), Caitlin Cooper, Shawna Gordon, Emily Van Egmond, Heather Garriock, Server Uzunlar (Jess Seaman 64'), Michelle Carney, Catherine Cannuli (Helen Petinos 76'), Teigen Allen, Alanna Kennedy, Linda O'neilL
Substitutes – Mackenzie Arnold (Gk), Jenna Kingsley
Cautions – Servet Uzunlar 43', Alanna Kennedy 62', Michelle Carney 65', Linda O'neill 90'

Melbourne Victory: Brianna Davey (Gk), Jessica Humble, Katie Hoyle, Stephanie Catley, Caitlin Friend (Cindy Lay 74'), Jessica Fishlock, Lisa De Vanna, Jessica Samuelsson, Enza Barilla (Beattie Goad 61'), Emma Checker, Gulcan Koca
Substitutes – Cassandra Dimovski (Gk), Laura Spiranovic
Cautions – None

Sydney FC 4 (Emma Kete 17', Leena Khamis 20', Jodie Taylor 44'/79')
Brisbane Roar 0
Sunday 19 January 2014
Sydney United Sports Centre, Sydney
Referee: Kate Jacewicz

Sydney FC: Casey Dumont (Gk), Teresa Polias, Alesha Clifford (Jodie Taylor 34', Danielle Brogan 85'), Liz Ralston, Nicola Bolger (Chloe Logarzo 77'), Amy Harrison, Caitlin Foord, Renee Rollason, Emma Kete, Leena Khamis, Sam Kerr
Substitutes – Sham Khamis (Gk)
Cautions – Alesha Clifford 28', Amy Harrison 71'

Brisbane Roar: Kate Stewart (Gk), Laura Alleway, Brooke Spence, Joanne Burgess (Ayesha Norrie 74'), Kim Carroll, Elise Kellond-Knight, Katrina Gorry, Vedrana Popovic, Tameka Butt, Emily Gielnik (Sunny Franco 66'), Hayley Raso (Larissa Crummer 51')
Substitutes – Nadine Angerer (Gk)
Cautions – Katrina Gorry 54'

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Courage under Fire

December 28th, 2013, was the day Melbourne Victory supporters clashed with their Western Sydney Wanderers counterparts and will be eternally etched in the memory of A- League chief, Damien de Bohun, as the day he announced himself to the Australian sporting public.
If sports followers regard sporting administrators as faceless, unaccountable individuals, this is one man whose profile has changed forever.
It is also ironic with the rapid, unprecedented growth of the Western Sydney Wanderers that a misguided, minority element of their supporters may just be spoiling the party for the largely dedicated, loyal and hard core fan base.
In this interview with ROGER SLEEMAN, Damien de Bohun discusses the FFA'S reaction to the events of 28th December, the progress and degree of public support for the A- League, the media's role, the L eague's sustainability and plans for expansion.

ROGER SLEEMAN:
What is your background in football?
DAMIEN DE BOHUN:
My father emigrated from Leicester at the age of eighteen and naturally possessed a love of the game which he instilled in me from an early age.
I played in a competitive high school environment at Carey Grammar and graduated to Diamond Valley in the National Youth League before playing three hundred games in the Victorian Premier and State Leagues during the 1990's for Box Hill.
I recently gained referee qualifications and have become devoted to junior coaching with my two childrens' teams.

Were the unfortunate events of December 28th a distraction the game just didn't need when really the concentration should be on football?
The events of the day recorded on the public record are unacceptable but on a positive note the work with clubs, government, police and venues has contributed this season to a considerable improvement in behaviour across the A- League.
The Hyundai A- League must be a family friendly, fun and enjoyable environment for all spectators and the events of December 28th were out of the ordinary so for this reason the FFA has taken up a serious position.
It is pleasing we've received so much support on our stance from the wider community and with the progress the game is making, this is not the time to let an incident like this hold us back.

On the 3rd January, 2014, the FFA issued a statement charging Melbourne Victory and the Wanderers with bringing the game into disrepute due to the misconduct of their supporters.
Could this be considered inflammatory and a severe challenge to the clubs?
We've taken the view that the relationship between the fans and the clubs is an integral part of football and an incident of this magnitude had to be treated with the utmost of seriousness. Hence the decision to impose the suspended three points on both clubs.

On September 28th 2012, you stated the game would boom with the introduction of the marquee players, Del Piero, Heskey and Ono. More than twelve months later these players are hardly hitting the headlines and people are saying general playing standards are deteriorating.
What is your view?
Football has now moved into mainstream Australian sport and with this comes more scrutiny and greater expectations.
The reality is that this season has seen additional broadcasts with the introduction of the SBS coverage on a Friday night and attendances and memberships particularly have increased significantly.
There are young Australian stars like Adam Taggart emerging who have travelled to the Asian u/22 competition in Oman, Brisbane Roar is putting in some outstanding performances, the Wanderers are continuing to excel and Victory have displayed great moments.
Importantly, the marquee players created new interest in the game and people started to take notice of the League and a higher standard of performance.

Did the thrashings by Brazil and France last year, impact on the image of the A- League?
It did have an impact on Australian football but Ange Postecoglou's appointment as national coach which has been embraced by the Australian public has been a mitigating factor.
We do face a huge challenge in our first round group against Chile, Holland and Spain at the Brazil World Cup but I believe Ange will cultivate our traditional fighting qualities and provide the necessary balance
The fact we're pitting our skills against the best teams in the world in Brazil can only be a positive for the A- League and the game as a whole.

You also were quoted on 28/9/12 that the key to maintaining hype in the game is to provide an increasing standard of football.
In the former NSL, there were players like Patikas, Farina, Soper, Mitchell,Crino,Petersen,Katholos,Trimboli,Kosmina,Barnes,Taliadoros,Viduka ,Henderson and Corica to name a few.
Where are the star players now?
There's no doubting the quality of these former players but you will find after the World Cup, the Asian Cup and with the opportunities for young players to play in different Asian tournaments, the necessary exposure to better competition will lift playing levels and hence provide star quality.
One advantage the young player has these days is they can play full time professional football at a minimum salary of $120,000 under the salary cap whereas most of the NSL players named were forced to play overseas to maximise their earnings and were ultimately lost to the spectator public.

Football supporters are used to the best commentary from match callers in the UK like Paul Dempsey, John Champion and Peter Drury and expert commentators like Paul Walsh, Trevor Francis and Clive Allen.
Do you monitor the performance and selection criteria of the television network commentators and the other media outlets?
We work closely with Fox and SBS and now the coverage of the A- League has been taken up by more radio stations and digital mediums.
I receive a daily report on every aspect of the media coverage because the business of football has grown so much we have to monitor the media.
We typically find a whole range of media people and some are doing a great job.
However, the balance is finding people with football expertise who can communicate in the public space and hopefully this will improve in time.

When will more National Youth League matches be played as curtain raisers to the A- League so people can witness the progress of our young players and also to provide some big time atmosphere for them?
More double headers are being looked at and we're also examining the best model which will allow our youth players to perform ten months of the year.
This exercise is being discussed with A- League clubs and the state bodies so that within two years, the best young players will integrate into the National Premier Leagues, providing the opportunity to play most of the year and develop more quickly.

It was generally accepted that former CEO, Ben Buckley, made a poor decision in not admitting Wollongong to the A- League in 2008, particularly in light of the $4 million dollars invested in the upgrade of WIN Stadium by the former NSW Labour government.
Can you comment on this and what are the current plans for expansion of the A- League?
Certainly, by the actions of North Queensland and Gold Coast, the FFA would acknowledge that the wrong markets were chosen.
When the next broadcast rights are negotiated, we'll be examining a model for ten teams or an expansion to twelve.
Significant markets of population will be considered so Wollongong is a possibility and Western Brisbane and Western Melbourne which are the two fastest growing population corridors in the country will be high on the list.
Also, as I've mentioned previously, we can't discount basing a team in Asia or playing A- League matches there in the future.
To comprehend the size of Asian markets, you have only have to recall the Central Coast Mariner's match against Guangzhou in the Asian Champions League last May which attracted 490,000 television viewers in Australia compared to 490 million in China.

According to an article in the Financial Review last April, the A- League recorded a loss of $20 million last season. Consequently, is the League sustainable?
It is true in the nine years of the League, $150 million has been invested by the clubs but we are anticipating they will be breaking even in three to four years.
On the positive side, this is the first year distributions have been made to match the salary cap and the financial situation this season will improve.
Critically, a major objective is the financial stability of the member clubs.

This interview first appeared on Western Sydney Business Access.

Futsal Super 5s goes from strength to strength

Futsal Super 5s are one of Melbourne's largest futsal competition providers. Established in 1999, Futsal Super 5s offer Men's, Mixed and Women's futsal competitions with weekly matches taking place in the evening at various locations across Melbourne.
The organisation has come a long way, initially commencing with just the one competition in Carlton on a Friday night. Competition Manager Tom Kondo stated "It was very much a niche market back then (1999). Social-level competitions were scarce, however it was highly popular and people were willing to travel from all over Melbourne to participate in our competition in Carlton."
The five-a-side version of football has become one of the fastest-growing sports in Australia. Indoor soccer was traditionally linked to the 'oversized fluffy tennis ball' version of the game, however Futsal is the only version of the game recognised by FIFA.
The game has changed immensely with futsal competitions now saturating many areas of Melbourne. The social media craze has also positively transformed the game and Futsal Super 5s make use of the various social media outlets with regular uploads of team and match images along with occasional video highlights for a value-add approach to social futsal.
Futsal Super 5s possess a committed Management Team with decades of experience, Competition Administration staff and a pool of match officials servicing their weekly futsal competitions.
Off the court, Futsal Super 5s maintain a professional website along advanced league fixture, results & standings software and online registration forms.
Men's and Mixed competitions had been the bread and butter of Futsal Super 5s since its inception, however in 2011 a women's-only competition was successfully launched at the Futsal Super 5s Burwood facility.
"Demand for an inclusive and friendly competition for women and girls was high and we now proudly host two women's leagues at Burwood and one at Vermont South" said Competition Manager Tom Kondo.

Futsal Super 5s currently host the following competitions at locations below:

Men's Leagues: Box Hill (Thur / Fri), Camberwell (Sun), Endeavour Hills (Mon), Hawthorn (Sun), Oakleigh South (Sun), Parkville (Wed / Sun), Preston (Mon / Thur) & Vermont South (Sun / Tue).

Mixed Leagues: Burwood (Sun), Carlton North (Tue / Wed), Collingwood (Sun), Hawthorn (Thur), Oakleigh South (Mon), Preston (Tue / Wed), Vermont South (Wed).

Women's Leagues: Burwood (Mon / Thur), Vermont South (Mon).

Photo: ADRIAN GAGLIONE

Matthew Smith

BRISBANE ROAR FC

Italian Serie A

Luca Cetta

Bianchi double stunts Napoli

Napoli's Scudetto ambitions took a hit after a draw with Bologna, but Rafael Benitez remains upbeat about what his side has achieved so far this season.

It's July 24 at Rome's Fiumicino airport. Waiting in the arrivals section is a large group, eagerly awaiting one face to pop through. The sort of scene replayed at airports all over the world. There's as much fervent as teenage girls waiting to greet the latest hit boy band.

He steps through. It's Gonzalo Higuain, landing in the capital ready to make the journey south to Naples. Having told Real Madrid of his desire to leave and rejecting Arsenal, Higuain's new home is a short drive away. Not since another Argentine landed in Italy back in 1984 had there been such excitement in Naples over a player's arrival.

Higuain's big money move to Napoli was the crown jewel of an exciting summer transfer campaign. It started with Rafael Benitez' appointment. Napoli hoped he could sprinkle his winning edge on to the squad.

There was something of an ex-

Bianchi's injury time equaliser rescued a late point for Bologna

Real Madrid convention in southern Italy. In addition to Higuain, Raul Albiol and Jose Callejon also arrived. Not to mention Dries Mertens and Pepe Reina too. "We have targeted players with a few years experience, players who can hit the ground running," declared the new boss.

Napoli were thinking big. They may have lost goals aplenty when Edinson Cavani traded the Azzurri for Paris St-Germain, but added quality and depth. Perhaps this was their year, after finishing second to a dominant Juventus side in 2012-13. Would the Bianconeri be as motivated after two championship victories?

Benitez was not going to offer any bold predictions. "We are implementing a new and different way of playing. We are just at the beginning but there are good signs for the future."

One such change was to make Napoli a more possession-based team than under Walter Mazzarri. With the now-Inter boss at the helm, the Partenopei were one of Europe's premier counter-attacking units. They would also change from a three to four-man defence.

Nineteen games under Benitez had Napoli third on 42 points, 10 off the lead. It hasn't been a bad start. Quite the opposite - this was Napoli's best ever first half of a season. Never before had they collected as many points. Problem is, they met a Juventus side which claimed 17 wins from the first 19 games. If it were the Bianconeri of one season prior, Napoli would be just two points adrift. Then there's Roma, 10 successive wins putting them second.

Nonetheless, there are grumbles. Perhaps hopes did exceed expectations after mass summer changes. There are issues to iron out. The main concern is defensively. Napoli do not possess a brick-wall type defensive aura. It's an area which needs addressing, either this month or certainly in June.

ITALY Serie A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Juventus	20	18	1	1	50	14	+36	55	W W W W W
2 Roma	20	14	5	1	42	10	+32	47	W W L W D
3 Napoli	20	13	4	3	43	22	+21	43	D W W D W
4 Fiorentina	20	12	4	4	37	20	+17	40	W D W W W
5 Internazionale	20	8	8	4	38	24	+14	32	L D L W L
6 Hellas Verona	20	10	2	8	34	31	+3	32	L L W W D
7 Torino	20	7	8	5	33	27	+6	29	W D L W W
8 Parma	20	7	8	5	31	27	+4	29	W W W D D
9 Lazio	20	7	6	7	26	28	-2	27	W D W L W
10 Genoa	20	7	5	8	20	24	-4	26	W L W L D
11 Milan	20	6	7	7	32	30	+2	25	W L W L D
12 Atalanta	20	7	3	10	21	29	-8	24	W W L L D
13 Sampdoria	20	5	6	9	24	31	-7	21	L W L D W
14 Cagliari	20	4	9	7	19	29	-10	21	L L D D D
15 Udinese	20	6	2	12	20	31	-11	20	L L L W L
16 Chievo	20	4	5	11	15	26	-11	17	L D D L L
17 Bologna	20	3	8	9	19	35	-16	17	D D L W L
18 Sassuolo	20	4	5	11	21	43	-22	17	L W L L L
19 Livorno	20	3	4	13	16	36	-20	13	L L L L L
20 Catania	20	3	4	13	13	37	-24	13	L L W L D

Latest Results	Next Match
Roma 3 - 0 Livorno	Napoli v Chievo
Juventus 4 - 2 Sampdoria	Lazio v Juventus
Udinese 2 - 3 Lazio	Hellas Verona v Roma
Atalanta 1 - 0 Cagliari	Torino v Atalanta
Catania 0 - 3 Fiorentina	Sampdoria v Bologna
Genoa 1 - 0 Internazionale	Internazionale v Catania
Bologna 2 - 2 Napoli	Cagliari v Milan
Chievo 1 - 2 Parma	Livorno v Sassuolo
Sassuolo 0 - 2 Torino	Parma v Udinese
Milan 1 - 0 Hellas Verona	Fiorentina v Genoa

One To Watch This Weekend...

Lazio secured a stirring comeback victory over Udinese to make it seven points from three matches under Edy Reja. They welcome leaders Juventus to the capital on Saturday. The Bianconeri have won 12 in a row, but the trip to Rome is always a tough test.

Dropped points in winnable home games don't help. Sassuolo claimed their first ever top-flight point against Napoli, just days after a 7-0 mauling by Inter. Rafa's men lost versus Parma and coughed up a late lead to draw with Udinese.

Juventus and Roma won on Saturday - 4-2 over Sampdoria and 3-0 versus Livorno respectively - so Napoli knew three points at relegation-threatened Bologna were paramount.

"Our objective is to improve. The first half of the season has been very positive and you can see the team growing," said Benitez in the pre-match Press conference. "We are working one day at a time, one game at a time, so it is too early to make predictions. The important thing is for the squad to believe in itself. If we keep playing this way, then we'll go far."

Bologna - in the bottom three at the start of the day - showed plenty of fight. This was Coach Davide Ballardini's second match in charge after taking over from Stefano Pioli. The first was a scoreless draw against Lazio.

Rolando Bianchi headed just wide from Alessandro Diamanti's cross, a warning Napoli would not heed. The Italian international found Bianchi again in the 37th minute and he flicked his header past Rafael, standing in for the injured Reina.

Higuain nodded wide from close range after a Callejon cross, but was presented a golden opportunity moments later when Blerim Dzemaili was bundled over inside the penalty area. The Argentine belted home the resulting spot-kick.

Now with the ascendency, Napoli pounced. Marek Hamsik – returning from an injury which kept him out since November – started the counter which ended with Callejon finding the bottom corner with 10 minutes remaining.

Things went from bad to worse for the hosts. Panagiotis Kone – who conceded the penalty – was shown his second yellow card and left the Rossoblu down to 10 men. Yet Napoli looked nervous. They conceded a late corner, from which an unmarked Bianchi converted. 2-2 it finished.

"I believe Napoli's campaign is very positive," stressed Benitez afterwards. "Of course we can improve and this game shows we are still missing something. Did you expect Juventus to get 55 points? Napoli have had a very good season, but Juventus and Roma have done better. That's all." He did admit they are looking for the right balance in defence.

Meanwhile, they added creativity in midfield by signing rising star Jorginho from Verona in a co-ownership deal. He enjoyed an impressive opening half to the term for high-flying Hellas.

Yet Hamsik admitted their Scudetto chances are all but over. "Now the gap is pretty big and I think it's too much. We should look at Roma and taking second place, which would allow us to go directly into the Champions League."

Spanish La Liga

Pepe Lopez

Real Madrid Close The La Liga Gap

Spanish Football's most successful club Real Madrid has put behind it a slow start to the 2013-13 La Liga season. With both FC Barcelona and Atletico Madrid recording surprise draws this past weekend, Real Madrid have been able to close the gap between themselves and the top 2 clubs to just 1 point. An emphatic 5-0 away win at Real Betis in Seville has put Real Madrid fully back into contention to claim the La Liga title, with Italian Coach Carlo Ancelotti's first season in charge at Real. Bet365 currently rates Barcelona $1.80 favorites, Real Madrid $2.62 and Atletico Madrid out to $8.50.

As quoted in Madrid based sports publication, Marca, Real Madrid

Ronaldo and Bale impress as Real Madrid showed they are far from out of the title race by demolishing Real Betis 5-0

Coach Carlo Ancelotti had this to say after the 5-0 win against Real Betis and ahead of his Copa Del Rey Quarter Final clash against Espanyol;

"Now we're where we wanted to be at the start of the campaign. Tomorrow we play in the quarter finals of the cup, which is an important competition. We're really up for it. Bale is stronger on the left and Ronaldo on the right. We need to repeat our league performance against Espanyol, and if possible improve it. Aguirre could surprise us. Espanyol is a team with some strong players and they'll try to gain the upper hand in the first leg. The objective isn't to settle the tie tomorrow, because it will be decided at the Bernabéu".

Speaking about young Spanish attacker Isco, Ancelotti had these words;

"The three are working very well defensively. We'll continue with the same system, although it makes things more difficult for Isco. He can slot into the roles played by Di María or Modric so far, or play as a 'false 9' instead of Karim. And we haven't forgotten the other system with Isco as an attacking midfielder either. I've spoken a lot about balance and I think we've achieved it now. We continue to score goals and defensively we're stronger because the individual quality of our defenders has improved."

Meanwhile, added to the repertoire of Real Madrid's Portuguese star attacker Ronaldo, is now the back flip maneuver. Just a couple of months ago, Ronaldo had an ugly and global spat with the FIFA President Sepp Blatter who had candidly mocked Ronaldo, when claiming he preferred Leo Messi to Ronaldo based on Blatter's dislike of Ronaldo's "Commander/General like behaviour" on the pitch. In retaliation, Ronaldo claimed he would boycott the "FIFA World Player Of The Year" Ceremony at what he believed was an explanation as to why he has not won this award more than he should have.

After some behind the scenes phone calls and emergency PR on Sepp Blatter's behalf, Ronaldo did eventually change his mind and attend the 2013 FIFA World Player Of The Year Ceremony, and as luck would have it, be awarded the 2013 World Player Of The Year.

In a somewhat contradictory interview for "France Football", Ronaldo made these claims;

"I had been nervous for weeks and all the time before it. There was huge tension for me. Everyone was talking about the Ballon d'Or. At first they said I was going to win, then I wasn't going to win and it was going to be Franck Ribery. Everyone was talking and you try not to listen but you cannot help but be influenced by such an atmosphere. Even my mother was asking me whether I would win! I certainly feel much calmer now that it is all over."

SPAIN La Liga

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Barcelona	20	16	3	1	54	13	+41	51	D D W W W
2 Atlético Madrid	20	16	3	1	48	12	+36	51	D D W W W
3 Real Madrid	20	16	2	2	58	21	+37	50	W W W W D
4 Athletic Club	20	12	3	5	36	26	+10	39	W W L W D
5 Villarreal	20	11	4	5	39	21	+18	37	W W W L L
6 Real Sociedad	20	9	6	5	38	30	+8	33	D L W W W
7 Sevilla	20	8	7	5	37	31	+6	31	D D W W D
8 Espanyol	20	7	4	9	23	25	-2	25	W L L W D
9 Valencia	20	7	3	10	26	31	-5	24	D L W L L
10 Granada	20	7	3	10	19	25	-6	24	D W L L W
11 Levante	20	6	6	8	19	28	-9	24	D W L L W
12 Getafe	20	7	3	10	22	33	-11	24	D L L L L
13 Osasuna	20	6	4	10	17	29	-12	22	D W W D D
14 Málaga	20	5	6	9	19	24	-5	21	D L L W W
15 Elche	20	5	6	9	19	28	-9	21	W D L L L
16 Celta de Vigo	20	5	4	11	23	32	-9	19	L W L D L
17 Almería	20	5	4	11	21	40	-19	19	L L W W D
18 Real Valladolid	20	3	7	10	23	37	-14	16	L L D L W
19 Rayo Vallecano	20	5	1	14	19	47	-28	16	L W L L L
20 Real Betis	20	2	5	13	16	43	-27	11	L L D L L

Latest Results	Next Match
Málaga 0 - 0 Valencia	Celta de Vigo v Real Betis
Real Betis 0 - 5 Real Madrid	Real Madrid v Granada
Elche 2 - 0 Rayo Vallecano	Real Valladolid v Villarreal
Granada 0 - 0 Osasuna	Valencia v Espanyol
Espanyol 1 - 0 Celta de Vigo	Sevilla v Levante
Getafe 2 - 2 Real Sociedad	Almería v Getafe
Villarreal 2 - 0 Almería	Osasuna v Athletic Club
Levante 1 - 1 Barcelona	R Vallecano v Atlético Madrid
Atlético Madrid 1 - 1 Sevilla	Barcelona v Málaga
Athletic Club 4 - 2 R Valladolid	Real Sociedad v Elche

One To Watch This Weekend...

Real Valladolid will host Villareal at Estadi Jose Zorrilla in the Castille and Leon Region of Spain, Fox Sports 1 will broadcast this match Live Sunday January 26, 2014, 4am AEST.

Almeria will host visitors Getafe on the Southern Spanish Coast Line at Estadio de los Juegos Mediterráneos, Fox Sports 1 will broadcast this match Live Sunday January 26, 2014, 10pm AEST.

La Liga Leaders Barcelona will host Malaga, a delayed broadcast of this match can viewed at on Fox Sports 1 on Monday January 27, 2014, 5pm AEST.

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CROATIA 1.HNL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Dinamo Zagreb	19	13	4	2	35	13	+22	43	W W D W W
2 Hajduk Split	20	10	8	2	35	18	+17	38	D D D D W
3 Rijeka	20	10	8	2	37	18	+19	38	W D D W D
4 Lokomotiva	20	10	3	7	31	27	+4	33	L D W L W
5 Split	20	8	7	5	21	17	+4	31	L D W D D
6 Istra 1961	19	7	5	7	27	26	+1	26	W D W L D
7 Slaven Koprivnica	20	3	9	8	23	27	-4	18	D D D D L
8 Zadar	20	4	5	11	15	33	-18	17	L D L D L
9 Osijek	20	2	6	12	14	41	-27	12	D L D D D
10 Hrvatski Drago…	20	1	7	12	15	33	-18	10	D L L D D

SCOTLAND SPL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Celtic	21	18	3	0	48	12	+36	57	W W W W W
2 Aberdeen	23	14	2	7	33	20	+13	44	L W W W W
3 Motherwell	22	14	1	7	32	28	+4	43	L W W W W
4 Inverness CT	21	11	4	6	29	19	+10	37	W D L L D
5 Dundee United	23	9	7	7	39	27	+12	34	L D D L L
6 St. Johnstone	23	9	5	9	31	26	+5	32	W D W L L
7 Hibernian	23	7	7	9	21	23	-2	28	L L D W W
8 St. Mirren	22	6	5	11	23	38	-15	23	W L L L D
9 Kilmarnock	22	6	4	12	26	35	-9	22	D L W L W
10 Ross County	22	6	3	13	26	39	-13	21	W D W W L
11 Partick Thistle	23	4	8	11	21	38	-17	20	L D D W L
12 Heart of Midlo…	23	3	5	15	18	42	-24	-1	D L L L D

SERBIA Super Liga

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Partizan	15	10	3	2	28	12	+16	33	W W W W L
2 Crvena Zvezda	15	10	2	3	30	15	+15	32	W W W W W
3 Jagodina	15	8	3	4	19	12	+7	27	W W W L W
4 Radnički Niš	15	6	6	3	16	10	+6	24	L W L W W
5 Vojvodina	15	6	6	3	20	17	+3	24	L W L D D
6 Novi Pazar	15	7	3	5	18	16	+2	24	W L D W W
7 Čukarički	15	6	4	5	14	13	+1	22	L L D W L
8 Spartak Subotica	15	6	3	6	12	19	-7	21	D L W L W
9 Napredak	15	4	5	6	19	18	+1	17	D L W L L
10 OFK Beograd	15	5	2	8	17	24	-7	17	D L L W W
11 Voždovac	15	4	4	7	13	17	-4	16	L W L L L
12 Radnički Kragu…	15	4	4	7	15	21	-6	16	L W D L D
13 Sloboda Užice	15	4	4	7	13	19	-6	16	W L L W L
14 Javor Ivanjica	15	3	6	6	14	19	-5	15	D L D D L
15 Donji Srem	15	3	5	7	15	19	-4	14	D W W L L
16 Rad Beograd	15	3	2	10	6	18	-12	11	D L L L W

GERMANY Bundesliga

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Bayern München	16	14	2	0	42	8	+34	44	W W W W W
2 Bayer Leverkusen	17	12	1	4	32	16	+16	37	L L W W W
3 Borussia M'gla…	17	10	3	4	35	19	+16	33	D D W W W
4 Borussia Dortmund	17	10	2	5	38	20	+18	32	L D L W L
5 Wolfsburg	17	9	3	5	28	19	+9	30	D W W D D
6 Hertha BSC	17	8	4	5	27	20	+7	28	W W W D L
7 Schalke 04	17	8	4	5	32	28	+4	28	D W L W D
8 Augsburg	17	7	3	7	21	25	-4	24	D W W D W
9 Mainz 05	17	7	3	7	25	31	-6	24	W D D L W
10 Stuttgart	16	5	4	7	29	31	-2	19	L W L L W
11 Werder Bremen	17	5	4	8	22	37	-15	19	W L L D L
12 Hoffenheim	17	4	6	7	36	38	-2	18	L D W D L
13 Hannover 96	17	5	3	9	23	31	-8	18	L D L W L
14 Hamburger SV	17	4	4	9	33	38	-5	16	L L L D W
15 Eintracht Fran…	17	3	6	8	20	29	-9	15	D W L L D
16 Freiburg	17	3	5	9	16	31	-15	14	W L L L W
17 Nürnberg	17	0	11	6	17	33	-16	11	D D D L D
18 Eintracht Brau…	17	3	2	12	10	32	-22	11	W L L L L

HOLLAND Eredivisie

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Ajax	19	12	4	3	42	17	+25	40	W W W W W
2 Vitesse	19	12	4	3	44	25	+19	40	W D W W W
3 Twente	19	10	7	2	44	19	+25	37	W D W W W
4 Feyenoord	19	11	3	5	41	26	+15	36	W W W W W
5 Heerenveen	19	8	6	5	44	34	+10	30	D W W L D
6 Groningen	19	7	7	5	37	33	+4	28	D W L L D
7 AZ	19	8	3	8	32	33	-1	27	W L L L L
8 PSV	19	7	5	7	35	26	+9	26	L W W L L
9 Utrecht	19	7	3	9	28	39	-11	24	L L L W W
10 Go Ahead Eagles	19	6	5	8	29	43	-14	23	L W L W D
11 PEC Zwolle	19	5	7	7	26	26	+0	22	L L L L D
12 NAC Breda	19	6	4	9	29	35	-6	22	L W L L D
13 Heracles	19	6	4	9	26	34	-8	22	L D W W D
14 Cambuur	19	5	4	10	18	26	-8	19	W L L D L
15 RKC Waalwijk	19	4	7	8	26	35	-9	19	D D W D D
16 Roda JC	19	4	7	8	32	43	-11	19	D L L L L
17 NEC	19	4	6	9	32	50	-18	18	W L W L W
18 ADO Den Haag	19	5	2	12	22	43	-21	17	L L L W D

TURKEY Süper Lig

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Fenerbahçe	17	13	2	2	43	19	+24	41	W L W W D
2 Galatasaray	17	9	6	2	28	17	+11	33	W W D W D
3 Kasımpaşa	17	9	4	4	32	21	+11	31	L D W D D
4 Beşiktaş	17	8	5	4	30	19	+11	29	L W L D D
5 Sivasspor	17	9	2	6	31	23	+8	29	W L W D L
6 Eskişehirspor	17	8	3	6	22	15	+7	27	L W D W D
7 Trabzonspor	17	8	3	6	25	21	+4	27	W L D L W
8 Karabükspor	17	7	5	5	17	17	+0	26	L W W W D
9 Akhisar Beledi…	17	7	4	6	21	21	+0	25	W W L W D
10 Bursaspor	17	6	6	5	19	19	+0	24	D W D D W
11 Gençlerbirliği	17	6	3	8	18	20	-2	21	W W D D L
12 Gaziantepspor	17	6	3	8	22	31	-9	21	D L W W W
13 Konyaspor	17	6	2	9	22	26	-4	20	W D L L W
14 Antalyaspor	17	4	6	7	20	23	-3	18	L L L D W
15 Rizespor	17	4	4	9	18	25	-7	16	L D L L L
16 Elazığspor	17	4	1	12	19	39	-20	13	W L W L L
17 Kayserispor	17	2	6	9	13	28	-15	12	L D D L D

THE CHAMPIONSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Leicester City	26	18	3	5	47	27	+20	57	W W W W W
2 Queens Park Ra…	26	15	7	4	31	16	+15	52	W W W D L
3 Burnley	26	14	9	3	39	20	+19	51	D W W D L
4 Derby County	26	14	5	7	50	34	+16	47	W L L W D
5 Nottingham Forest	26	11	11	4	39	26	+13	44	W D D W W
6 Reading	26	11	8	7	39	30	+9	41	W W D L L
7 Brighton & Hov…	26	10	9	7	30	23	+7	39	L W D W L
8 Blackburn Rovers	26	10	7	9	32	32	+0	37	L W W L D
9 Middlesbrough	26	9	9	8	41	33	+8	36	W W D W W
10 Ipswich Town	26	9	9	8	37	31	+6	36	L L D D W
11 Wigan Athletic	25	10	6	9	28	26	+2	36	L W W D D
12 Leeds United	26	10	5	11	35	35	+0	35	L L L L D
13 Huddersfield Town	26	9	7	10	35	31	+4	34	L W L W D
14 Blackpool	26	8	8	10	25	33	-8	32	L L L L D
15 Watford	25	7	10	8	36	31	+5	31	D L D W D
16 AFC Bournemouth	26	8	7	11	32	45	-13	31	D L D D W
17 Birmingham City	26	7	8	11	30	32	-2	29	L L D W D
18 Bolton Wanderers	26	6	10	10	31	42	-11	28	L D D L W
19 Sheffield Wedn…	25	5	11	9	32	33	-1	26	D W W D D
20 Millwall	26	6	7	13	27	50	-23	25	W L L D L
21 Charlton Athletic	25	5	9	11	22	31	-9	24	L D D W D
22 Doncaster Rovers	26	6	6	14	22	43	-21	24	W L L D L
23 Yeovil Town	25	5	5	15	21	38	-17	20	W L L L L
24 Barnsley	25	4	8	13	23	42	-19	20	W D L L D

LEAGUE ONE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Leyton Orient	26	17	6	3	56	24	+32	57	W W W D W
2 Brentford	26	17	5	4	45	24	+21	56	D W W W W
3 Wolverhampton …	26	15	7	4	41	19	+22	52	W L D D W
4 Preston North End	26	13	9	4	36	27	+9	48	D L W W W
5 Peterborough U…	27	14	3	10	44	35	+9	45	W W L L L
6 Rotherham United	26	12	8	6	45	34	+11	44	W W L L W
7 Walsall	27	11	9	7	30	24	+6	42	D W D W D
8 Port Vale	26	12	3	11	37	39	-2	39	W L L W W
9 Swindon Town	26	11	4	11	42	36	+6	37	L L W D L
10 Milton Keynes Dons	26	10	6	10	41	38	+3	36	L D W D L
11 Coventry City	26	12	8	6	55	45	+10	34	D D W D W
12 Colchester United	26	8	10	8	35	34	+1	34	W W D L W
13 Bradford City	26	7	12	7	38	32	+6	33	D D L D L
14 Gillingham	27	9	5	13	35	45	-10	32	W L W D L
15 Crawley Town	24	7	9	8	27	32	-5	30	D W L W D
16 Notts County	28	8	3	17	36	43	-7	27	L W W W L
17 Oldham Athletic	26	7	6	13	27	34	-7	27	L L W L D
18 Carlisle United	26	7	6	13	28	47	-19	27	L L L W L
19 Crewe Alexandra	27	7	6	14	27	53	-26	27	W L L W W
20 Sheffield United	26	6	8	12	26	35	-9	26	D L L W D
21 Shrewsbury Town	27	6	8	13	26	35	-9	26	L L L W L
22 Tranmere Rovers	26	6	7	13	29	48	-19	25	L D D L W
23 Bristol City	25	4	12	9	36	39	-3	24	D D W W D
24 Stevenage	26	6	4	16	24	44	-20	22	L W L L L

LEAGUE TWO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Scunthorpe United	26	13	9	4	38	24	+14	48	D W W W D
2 Rochdale	27	14	5	8	43	33	+10	47	D W W L W
3 Burton Albion	26	13	7	6	29	23	+6	46	D W D W W
4 Chesterfield	26	12	9	5	39	24	+15	45	D L W D D
5 Southend United	26	13	6	7	34	22	+12	45	W D W D W
6 Fleetwood Town	25	14	2	9	40	29	+11	44	W W W L L
7 Oxford United	25	11	9	5	35	21	+14	42	W D L L D
8 Newport County	24	10	8	6	34	27	+7	38	D L L W W
9 Morecambe	27	10	7	10	31	35	-4	37	D D L L W
10 Dagenham & Red	26	9	7	10	32	32	+0	34	L L W D L
11 Plymouth Argyle	26	9	7	10	23	29	-6	34	L D W D W
12 Cheltenham Town	26	8	9	9	33	37	-4	33	L L L W W
13 York City	27	7	11	9	32	32	+0	32	D W W W L
14 AFC Wimbledon	26	8	8	10	27	29	-2	32	D L W L D
15 Exeter City	25	9	5	11	31	34	-3	32	L L W L L
16 Hartlepool United	26	8	7	11	27	33	-6	31	L L L W D
17 Mansfield Town	27	7	9	11	27	36	-9	30	D L W D W
18 Accrington Stanley	26	7	8	11	31	38	-7	29	W D L D D
19 Wycombe Wandere	25	7	7	11	30	34	-4	28	L D L L W
20 Bury	26	6	10	10	30	34	-4	28	D L W W D
21 Portsmouth	26	6	10	10	30	39	-9	28	D D L D W
22 Bristol Rovers	25	6	9	10	22	26	-4	27	D W L D W
23 Torquay United	26	6	8	12	27	40	-13	26	W D L L D
24 Northampton Town	25	5	7	13	19	33	-14	22	L W D L L

Greece Super League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Olympiakos Piraeus	20	18	2	0	59	6	+53	56	W D W W W
2 PAOK	20	14	3	3	37	18	+19	45	L W W W D
3 Atromitos	20	10	7	3	29	14	+15	37	D D W W D
4 Panathinaikos	20	11	3	6	32	18	+14	36	W W L W W
5 Asteras Tripolis	20	9	8	3	30	18	+12	35	W W W D D
6 Panaitolikos	20	7	6	7	22	18	+4	27	W L W L W
7 Panthrakikos	20	7	6	7	26	31	-5	27	L W W L W
8 Xanthi	20	7	4	9	27	31	-4	25	D L L L W
9 OFI	20	6	7	7	18	22	-4	25	W L D W L
10 Kalloni	20	8	1	11	22	37	-15	25	W W L D L
11 Panionios	20	6	6	8	18	21	-3	24	W L D L W
12 PAS Giannina	20	7	2	11	21	31	-10	23	L L L W L
13 Ergotelis	20	4	9	7	21	26	-5	21	D L L D D
14 Apollon Smirnis	20	5	5	10	24	33	-9	20	L W W L D
15 Levadiakos	20	6	2	12	19	36	-17	20	L W L L L
16 Platanias	20	4	7	9	18	29	-11	19	L L D W L
17 Veria	20	4	6	10	18	33	-15	18	L W D D L
18 Aris	20	2	6	12	15	34	-19	12	D L L L D

France Ligue 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 PSG	21	15	5	1	51	14	+37	50	W W D W W
2 Monaco	21	13	6	2	34	14	+20	45	W D L W W
3 Lille	21	12	4	5	23	12	+11	40	L L D W L
4 Saint-Étienne	21	11	4	6	30	20	+10	37	W D W W W
5 Olympique Mars…	20	9	5	6	29	21	+8	32	W D D L L
6 Nantes	21	10	2	9	24	22	+2	32	L W L L W
7 Reims	21	8	8	5	25	24	+1	32	L W W D W
8 Olympique Lyonnais	21	8	7	6	32	27	+5	31	W W D D W
9 Bordeaux	21	8	7	6	27	23	+4	31	L L D W W
10 Lorient	21	9	3	9	28	27	+1	30	W L D W W
11 Toulouse	21	7	7	7	21	26	-5	28	L W D W D
12 Bastia	21	7	6	8	24	29	-5	27	W L D L L
13 Nice	21	8	3	10	20	25	-5	27	W D W W L
14 Guingamp	21	6	7	8	19	21	-2	25	L D D L D
15 Rennes	21	5	8	8	22	24	-2	23	D D L L L
16 Montpellier	21	3	12	6	21	25	-4	21	W D D L D
17 Evian TG	21	5	6	10	20	34	-14	21	D L L L D
18 Valenciennes	20	4	5	11	20	30	-10	17	W W L D L
19 Sochaux	21	2	5	14	15	43	-28	11	L L W L L
20 Ajaccio	21	1	6	14	14	38	-24	9	L L L L L

Portugal Premeira Liga

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Benfica	16	12	3	1	31	12	+19	39	W W W W D
2 Sporting CP	16	11	4	1	35	10	+25	37	W D D W W
3 Porto	16	11	3	2	32	11	+21	36	W L W W W
4 Estoril	16	7	5	4	25	18	+7	26	D D D W W
5 Vitória Guimarães	16	8	2	6	17	13	+4	26	W L W W D
6 Nacional	16	6	7	3	23	17	+6	25	D W D W D
7 Sporting Braga	16	7	2	7	21	18	+3	23	D W D W L
8 Rio Ave	16	6	3	7	13	16	-3	21	W D D L W
9 Académica	16	6	3	7	12	20	-8	21	W W L D L
10 Gil Vicente	16	5	3	8	13	21	-8	18	L L L L L
11 Marítimo	16	4	5	7	24	30	-6	17	L D D D D
12 Vitória Setúbal	16	4	4	8	17	28	-11	16	L L L L W
13 Arouca	16	4	3	9	14	21	-7	15	L W W L D
14 Belenenses	16	2	6	8	9	19	-10	12	L L D L D
15 Olhanense	16	3	3	10	10	25	-15	12	L W L L L
16 Paços de Ferreira	16	2	4	10	13	30	-17	10	D L D L L

One Game At A Time

France

Lille v Rennes
Guingamp v PSG
Ajaccio v Sochaux
Montpellier v Nice
Nantes v Reims
Toulouse v Bastia
Valenciennes v Lorient
Olympique Lyonnais v Evian TG
Bordeaux v Saint-Étienne
Monaco v Olympique Mars…

Germany

Borussia M'gla… v Bayern München
Borussia Dortmund v Augsburg
Stuttgart v Mainz 05
Wolfsburg v Hannover 96
Nürnberg v Hoffenheim
Freiburg v Bayer Leverkusen
Eintracht Fran… v Hertha BSC
Werder Bremen v Eintracht Brau…

League resumes Saturday 25th Jan 2014 due to winter break

Croatia

Istra 1961 v Dinamo Zagreb
Zadar v Osijek
Rijeka v Dinamo Zagreb
Split v Hajduk Split
Hrvatski Drago… v Istra 1961
Lokomotiva v Slaven Koprivnica

League resumes Saturday 8th Feb 2014 due to winter break

Serbia

Radnički Kragu v Radnički Niš
Novi Pazar v Partizan
Čukarički v Rad Beograd
Spartak Subotica v Sloboda Užice
Voždovac v OFK Beograd
Donji Srem v Vojvodina
Crvena Zvezda v Javor Ivanjica
Napredak v Jagodina

League resumes Saturday 23rd Feb 2014 due to winter break

English Championship

Huddersfield Town PSTP Notts Forest
Ipswich Town v Reading
Sheffield Wed PSTP Queens Park Ra…
Blackpool v Doncaster Rovers
Charlton Athletic PSTP AFC Bournemouth
Watford PSTP Birmingham City
Blackburn Rovers v Derby County
Leicester City v Middlesbrough
Derby County v Yeovil Town

English League One

Peterborough U… v Notts County
Crewe Alexandra v Milton Keynes Dons
Brentford v Gillingham
Swindon Town v Shrewsbury Town
Leyton Orient PSTP Stevenage
Rotherham United v Crawley Town
Wolverhampton … v Bristol City
Milton Keynes Dons PSTP Preston Nth End
Bradford City PSTP Port Vale
Tranmere Rovers v Crewe Alexandra
Colchester United PSTP Sheffield United
Oldham Athletic v Peterborough U…
Notts County v Walsall

English League Two

Chesterfield v Rochdale
Northampton Town v Chesterfield
AFC Wimbledon v Exeter City
Plymouth Argyle v Cheltenham Town
Mansfield Town v Wycombe Wanderers
Accrington Stanley v Bury
Morecambe v Portsmouth
Dagenham & Red… v Scunthorpe United
Oxford United v Torquay United
Bristol Rovers v Newport County
Hartlepool United v York City
Burton Albion v Fleetwood Town

Scotland

Kilmarnock v Inverness CT
Motherwell v Aberdeen
Ross County v Heart of Midlo…
St. Mirren v Partick Thistle
Hibernian v Celtic
Dundee United v St. Johnstone

Greece

Kalloni v Apollon Smirnis
Atromitos v PAS Giannina
Panathinaikos v Platanias
Levadiakos v Aris
Asteras Tripolis v OFI
PAOK v Veria
Ergotelis v Panaitolikos
Xanthi v Olympiakos Piraeus
Panthrakikos v Panionios

Turkey

Kasımpaşa v Karabükspor
Gençlerbirliği v Rizespor
Bursaspor v Eskişehirspor
Trabzonspor v Beşiktaş
Sivasspor v Kayserispor
Elazığspor v Akhisar Beledi…
Kayseri Erciye… v Antalyaspor
Gaziantepspor v Galatasaray
Fenerbahçe v Konyaspor

League resumes Saturday 25th Jan 2014 due to winter break

Holland

Heracles v RKC Waalwijk
ADO Den Haag v Feyenoord
NAC Breda v PEC Zwolle
Roda JC v Utrecht
PSV v AZ
Cambuur v Heerenveen
Vitesse v NEC
Groningen v Twente
Go Ahead Eagles v Ajax

Portugal

Estoril v Arouca
Sporting CP v Académica
Gil Vicente v Benfica
Marítimo v Porto
Vitória Setúbal v Rio Ave
Paços de Ferreira v Olhanense
Vitória Guimarães v Nacional
Belenenses v Sporting Braga

League resumes Sunday 2nd Feb 2014

European Results

THE CHAMPIONSHIP

Leeds United 0 - 1 Leicester City
Burnley 1 - 1 Sheffield Wedn…
Millwall 1 - 0 Ipswich Town
Nottingham Forest 4 - 1 Blackburn Rovers
Derby County 1 - 0 Brighton & Hov…
Barnsley 2 - 0 Blackpool
Queens Park Ra… 2 - 1 Huddersfield Town
Doncaster Rovers 3 - 0 Wigan Athletic
AFC Bournemouth 1 - 1 Watford
Middlesbrough 1 - 0 Charlton Athletic
Reading 7 - 1 Bolton Wanderers
Birmingham City 0 - 2 Yeovil Town

ENGLISH LEAGUE ONE

Gillingham 2 - 0 Swindon Town
Port Vale 1 - 0 Oldham Athletic
Crawley Town PSTP Wolverhampton …
Carlisle United 2 - 4 Colchester United
Peterborough U… 3 - 0 Tranmere Rovers
Preston North End 1 - 1 Coventry City
Sheffield United 2 - 2 Bradford City
Crewe Alexandra 1 - 2 Leyton Orient
Walsall 1 - 1 Brentford
Bristol City 2 - 2 Milton Keynes Dons
Stevenage 0 - 1 Notts County Peterborough U… 4 - 3 Notts County
Crewe Alexandra 2 - 0 Milton Keynes Dons

ENGLISH LEAGUE TWO

Wycombe Wanderers 0 - 1 Oxford United
Fleetwood Town 2 - 0 Hartlepool United
Scunthorpe United 0 - 0 AFC Wimbledon
Southend United 3 - 0 Chesterfield
Rochdale 3 - 0 Plymouth Argyle
Exeter City PSTP Morecambe
Bury 0 - 0 Burton Albion
Torquay United PSTP Northampton Town
Cheltenham Town 1 - 2 Accrington Stanley
Newport County PSTP Dagenham & Red…
York City 0 - 0 Bristol Rovers
Portsmouth 1 - 1 Mansfield Town
Chesterfield 2 - 2 Rochdale

FRANCE

Saint-Étienne 2 - 0 Lille
Bastia 1 - 0 Bordeaux
Lorient 2 - 0 Guingamp
Nice 2 - 0 Ajaccio
Rennes 0 - 0 Evian TG
Sochaux 0 - 2 Montpellier
Reims 0 - 2 Olympique Lyonnais
Toulouse 0 - 2 Monaco
PSG 5 - 0 Nantes

GREECE

Panaitolikos 3 - 1 Panthrakikos
Olympiakos Piraeus 2 - 0 Levadiakos
Panionios 2 - 0 PAOK
Aris 0 - 0 Atromitos
Apollon Smirnis 1 - 2 Asteras Tripolis
PAS Giannina 1 - 2 Kalloni
Ergotelis 2 - 2 Xanthi
Veria 1 - 3 Panathinaikos
Platanias 0 - 2 OFI

HOLLAND

Twente 3 - 1 Heracles
AZ 3 - 0 NAC Breda
RKC Waalwijk 1 - 1 Groningen
PEC Zwolle 1 - 2 Vitesse
Heerenveen 2 - 2 Roda JC
NEC 3 - 1 ADO Den Haag
Cambuur 2 - 0 Go Ahead Eagles
Utrecht 2 - 5 Feyenoord
Ajax 1 - 0 PSV

PORTUGAL

Olhanense 0 - 1 Vitória Guimarães
Arouca 1 - 2 Sporting CP
Rio Ave 1 - 0 Belenenses
Académica 1 - 0 Gil Vicente
Sporting Braga 1 - 1 Paços de Ferreira
Benfica 2 - 0 Marítimo
Porto 3 - 0 Vitória Setúbal
Nacional 2 - 2 Estoril

SCOTLAND

Aberdeen 0 - 1 Inverness CT
Celtic 3 - 0 Motherwell
Hibernian 2 - 3 St. Mirren
Partick Thistle 1 - 1 Kilmarnock
Ross County 3 - 0 Dundee United
St. Johnstone 3 - 3 Heart of Midlo…
Partick Thistle 0-1 St. Johnstone

FA Cup 3rd Round Replays

Peterborough U… 2 - 3 Kidderminster …
Milton Keynes Dons 1 - 3 Wigan Athletic
Fulham 3 - 0 Norwich City
Sheffield Wedn… 4 - 1 Macclesfield Town
Preston North End 3 - 2 Ipswich Town
Plymouth Argyle 2 - 3 Port Vale
Manchester City 5 - 0 Blackburn Rovers

FA Cup 4th Round

Arsenal v Coventry City
Nottingham Forest v Preston North End
AFC Bournemouth v Liverpool

Sun 26/01/14
Sunderland v Kidderminster …
Bolton Wanderers v Cardiff City
Southampton v Yeovil Town
Huddersfield Town v Charlton Athletic / Oxford United
Port Vale v Brighton & Hov…
Southend United v Hull City
Rochdale v Sheffield Wedn…
Wigan Athletic v Crystal Palace
Manchester City v Watford
Birmingham City v Swansea City
Stevenage v Everton

Mon 27/01/14
Sheffield United v Fulham
Chelsea v Stoke City

League Cup Semi Finals

2nd Legs
West Ham United 0-3 Manchester City
Manchetser City wins 9-0 on agg..

Manchester United 2-1 Sunderland
Sunderland wins 2-1 on pens after 3-3 on agg

League Cup Final:
Manchester City v Sunderland
Wembley, Sunday 2nd March

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